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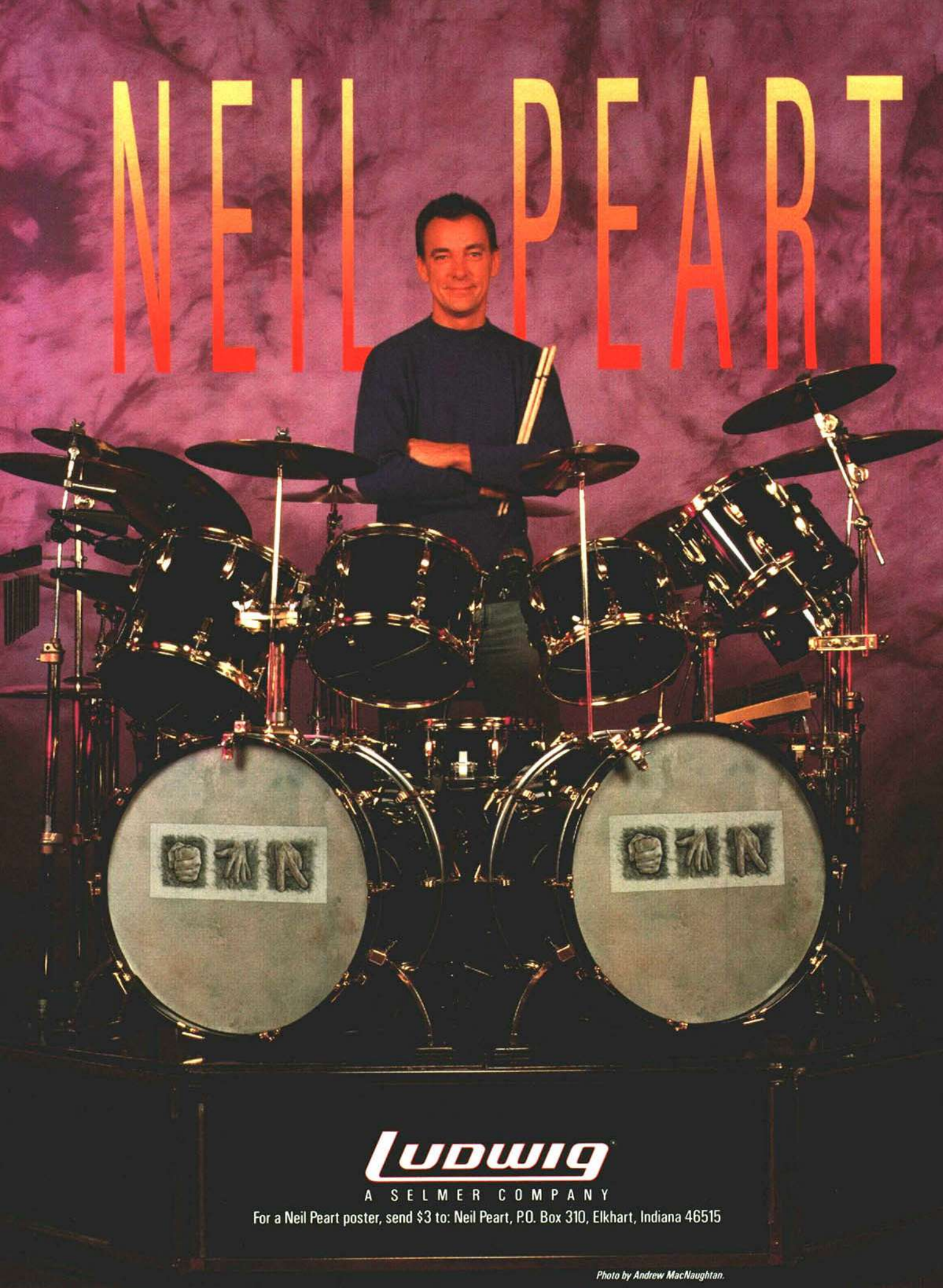

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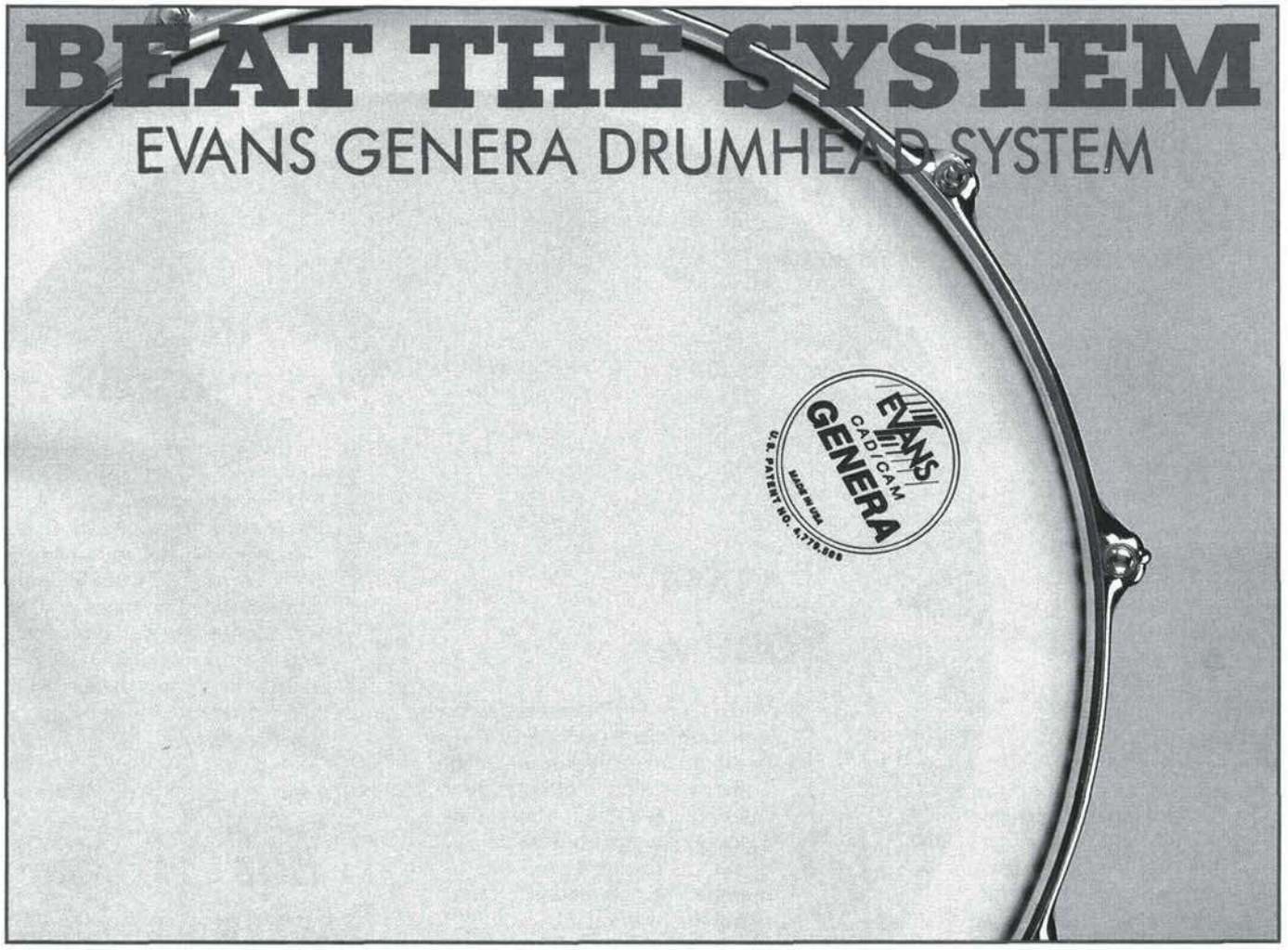

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VOLUME 15, NUMBER 6

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GARY HUSBAND

Several albums and tours with guitar great Allan Holdsworth have sealed Gary Husband's reputation as one of modern drumming's creative gems. Now he's taken the drum chair in Level 42, and a whole new set of challenges lies ahead. In this special interview, Gary elaborates on the demands of his new musical home.
•by Simon Goodwin

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When Guns N' Roses needed a new drummer to record their latest album, Cult skinsman Matt Sorum was glad to give it a go. After nailing enough tracks to fill a double album, Sorum was asked to join as a permanent member. MD chatted with Matt to get the inside scoop on the gig, and to take a closer look at the path that led him there.
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KENNY WASHINGTON

Kenny Washington's knowledge, understanding, and mastery of jazz drumming are rivaled by few. Kenny developed those skills with legends like Lee Konitz, Betty Carter, and Dizzy Gillespie, and expanded on them with players like Ralph Moore and Tommy Flanagan. Listen up, 'cause there's lots to learn from this master musician.
•by Ken Micallef

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How many times have you come across some clever drum innovation and thought, "Now why didn't *I* think of that?" Well, chances are Bob Gatzen had a hand in at least one of those products. Learn how companies like Noble & Cooley, Calato, and Evans have benefited from the ideas of drumming's quiet Renaissance man.
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EDITOR'S OVERVIEW

MD In Focus

Over the years, *Modern Drummer* has always stayed very sensitive to the needs and wants of its readers. Your input has come from much reader mail, and through extensive reader opinion surveys via direct response questionnaires. Both means have provided us with a clear indication of how satisfied you've been with the overall content and quality of the magazine.

Recently, we decided to take a slightly different approach by conducting a Focus Group meeting, where a small group of readers met face to face with *MD* editors to openly discuss every aspect of the magazine in considerable detail. Our Focus Group consisted of active drummers who've been reading the magazine a minimum of five years, and all within the median age of *MD*'s core readership.

Throughout the lengthy meeting, our Focus Group and editors closely examined every imaginable facet of *Modern Drummer.* For example, is enough information being supplied within our feature interviews and articles, and is that information *useful*? Does the selection of artists in each issue appear to be well-balanced? In general, what did group members care to see more of—or less of?

Photography, cover design, and graphics were other subjects up for discussion, as well as feelings on product, book, video, and record reviews, educational column subject matter, musical examples and transcriptions, advertising versus editorial, story layouts, and even the overall pacing of the magazine. At the end, there were hardly any aspects of *Modern Drummer* that hadn't been addressed at great length.

Obviously, the purpose of a magazine Focus Group is to offer editors an opportunity to determine where improvements or alterations might be made. The face-to-face format enables us to re-evaluate many areas of the magazine, and do a little fine-tuning, if you will. Of course, *major* changes in direction are rarely made on the basis of these meetings alone, without sampling a much wider spectrum of the readership. However, Focus Groups are an ideal means of encouraging in-depth discussion in all areas, and exploring our readers' thinking well beyond surface impressions. Though mail surveys are valid and larger in number, responses *do* tend to be rather cut-and-dried.

The *MD* Focus Group meeting was a valuable first-time experience for us, and one we'd certainly consider doing again. We learned even more about the typical *MD* reader, and much of what we learned will be reflected in the magazine—in an effort to remain as responsive to your needs as we possibly can.

MODERN DRUMMER®

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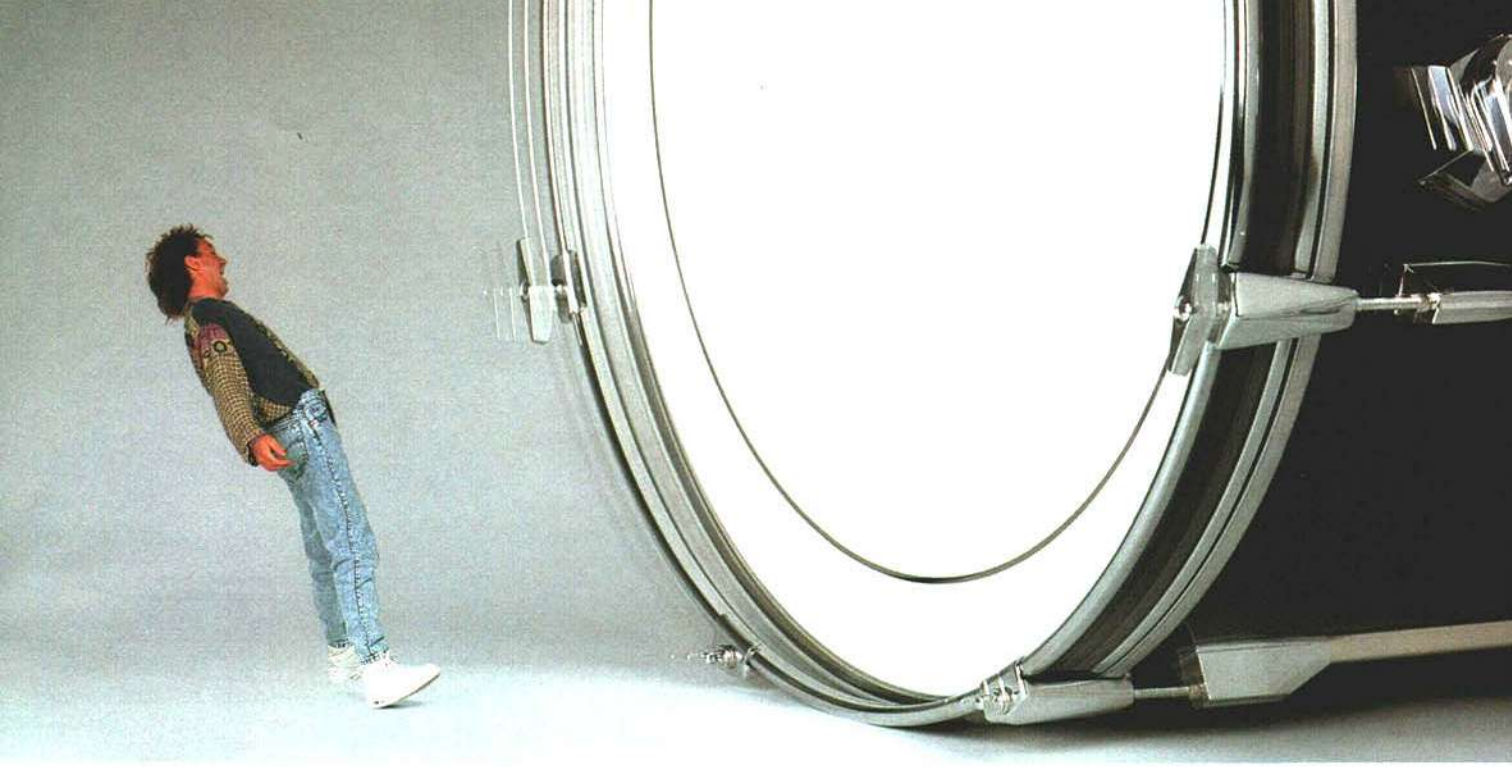

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Jonathan Moffet

Thank you so much for one of the best articles I've read in years [March '91 *MD*]. Jonathan "Sugarfoot" Moffett is one of my favorite drummers. He is truly a down-to-earth person, and he definitely deserves to be on the cover of *MD*.

The first time I met Jonathan was at a soundcheck at the Elton John show, October 14, 1989. He saw that I was wearing a Zildjian T-shirt and he started talking to me. I told him that I didn't pay to see Elton; I paid to see *him* play. He was so delighted that he walked up to his kit, grabbed a pair of sticks, and gave them to me. I saw him again on October 7, 1990, at the Florida Drum Expo. He remembered the previous incident and went on to ask me if I'd been busy playing and what my future goals were. When a person of Jonathan's caliber and position asks *me* questions like that, I know he's as real as you can get. Jonathan, good luck in the future; I hope to see you again soon. Robyn, thanks again!

Tom Miller
Sanford FL

Butch And Jaimoe

I'd like to thank you for your great article on the Allman Brothers Band drummers, Butch Trucks and Jaimoe Johanson [March '91 *MD*]. I read this article with great interest, because Butch and Jaimoe are two of my favorite drummers—or should I say *one* of my favorite drummers? I listen to the Allmans' 1971 *Live At The Fillmore East* recording frequently. Of particular note is the song "Whipping Post." Butch and Jaimoe provide no tricks—just pure magic.

Fred Pisciotta
Forest Hills NY

Gaskill Pro And Con

Thank you for the great article on Jerry Gaskill in the February 1991 issue. I had the pleasure of seeing King's X here in Corpus Christi and meeting Jerry after the show. His playing and vocals were excellent, and he is as friendly as anybody I have ever met. I think he is a great inspiration and would make any drummer he met proud to *be* a drummer. Thanks again for covering Jerry, who is definitely headed for the top!

Chuck Orr
Corpus Christi TX

Although I am a great admirer of Jerry Gaskill and King's X, as a drummer I was quite discouraged by Jerry's comments in the latter part of his interview. Jerry says, "I don't usually encourage people." It would seem to me that—being a drummer who has worked so hard to get where he is today—he would encourage rather than discourage those who hold the same aspirations.

I'm a drummer who has spent considerable time in the clubs working at my craft. Although I am realistic about the "pitfalls" of the music business, I'd find it more beneficial and educational to read about what I *can* do as opposed to what I *cannot* do. Drummers who have "made it" are our inspirations, and they should urge us to work hard at our goals instead of relating such a pessimistic view of our chances for success.

Jim Johnson
Pinehurst NC

Dear John

Dear John Perlman: In your letter to Andy Newmark in the *Ask A Pro* department of the March '91 *MD,* you asked for an easy way to count quintuplets. I've found that quintuplets can be vocalized quite easily by singing a five-syllable word like "serendipity" or "disestablishment." This method will, of course, work with other groupings as well; just find a word with the correct number of syllables. Good luck!

RJ. Rabin
Cedar Grove NJ

Drummer Input Requested

I am studying osteopathy (a form of complementary health therapy with many similarities to chiropractic) in England. I'm also an enthusiastic amateur drummer. I am investigating muscular-skeletal disorders that commonly affect rock drummers. To carry this out, I would be most grateful if professional and working drummers in the hard rock/metal/progressive rock fields would contact me, so that I could send them a simple questionnaire to complete. All information would be treated statistically with full anonymity, and all help would be most welcome. Please contact me at the address shown below. Thanks very much.

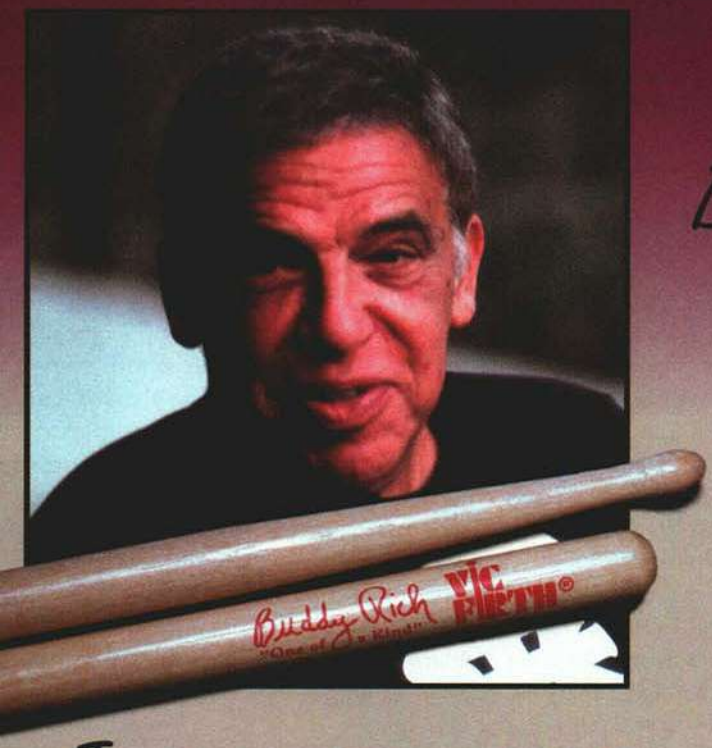
Marc Czerwinski
4 Archery Steps
St. Georges Fields
London W2 2YF
ENGLAND

Thanks, Tovarich

My name is Alexander and I am 23 years old. Please excuse my very bad English. I am drummer of a small band in local club. I try to study with the methods and notes of the greatest drummers as Steve Gadd, Peter Erskine, Carmine Appice, and Jack DeJohnette. *Modern Drummer* is well known magazine in the music fields here. *Modern Drummer* is very fine information for drummers. It is very best magazine in the world! Thank you.

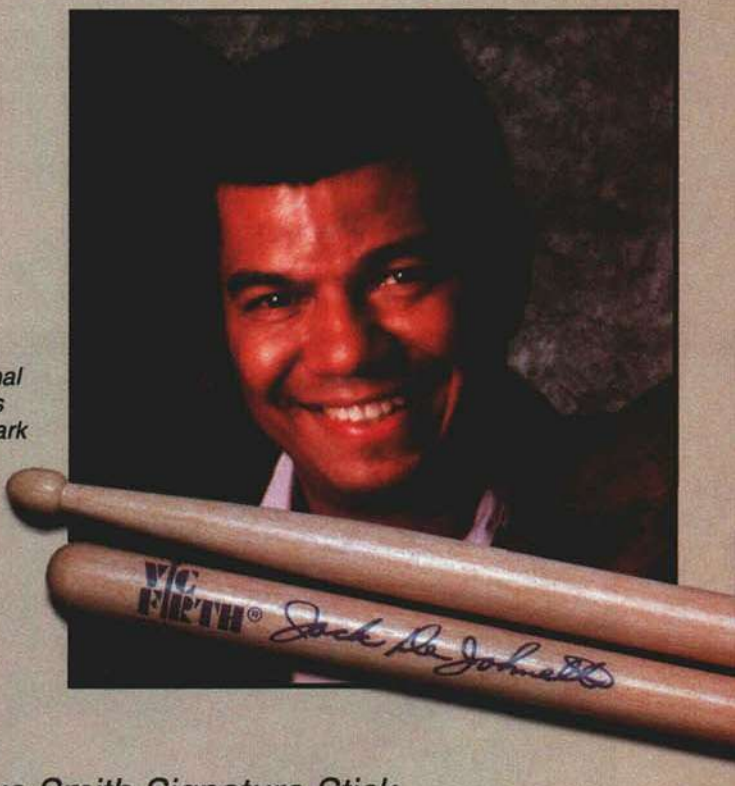
Alexander Antonov
Moscow, USSR

Vic Firth swings with 3 Generations of Jazz



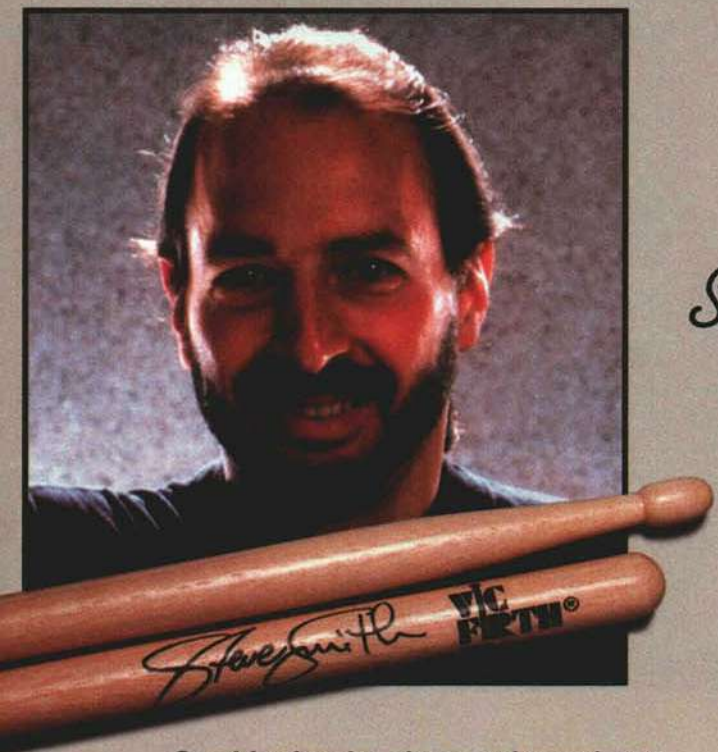
Buddy Rich Signature Stick

We have researched Buddy's taste in sticks and created this model. It is a 5A - Buddy's preferred model - with a larger tip, neck, and shoulder. The profile of the stick is thus a single, curved line, giving the stick added weight and strength. The wood is hickory, and is finished with a white stain and red signature. Overall length: 16 3/8".



Jack DeJohnette Signature Stick

This stick is a "Stretch 5A" - a full 5/16" longer than the conventional 5A, for extra drive and reach. Jazz and fusion artists will love its power. Crafted in hickory, and finished with a white stain and dark blue signature. Overall length: 16 5/16".



Steve Smith Signature Stick

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CHARLIE BENANTE

"Long tours can be tough," laments Anthrax drummer/songwriter/artist Charlie Benante, "but we've gotta be seen—people want to see us." And since last August, Anthrax has certainly been seen, covering the globe with their distinct brand of thrash. "We headlined from August through October in Australia, New Zealand, and Japan, and then we went out opening for Iron Maiden through March, and now we're headlining again." That's why they call it work!

According to Charlie, the opening slot for Iron Maiden was fun, "but we could only play about an hour, as opposed to our usual two-hour set. It's hard to cut back the set because we don't want to disappoint the people coming to see us. We tried to pick our best stuff from the band's history."

Speaking of the band's history, Anthrax's long-form video release, *Anthrax Through Time: PO.V.,* tracks the course of the band through interviews with the guys and live clips from the beginning right up to the present. By watching the video you get some idea as to how the band has evolved. But how has Charlie's playing in particular evolved? "For the most part, it's been such a gradual thing that it's hard for me to notice. However, I did go through a rough time back around '86. I was just completely unhappy at the drums—I couldn't get into it. I realized that we had been touring non-stop for a long time, and I had just hit the wall burnout-wise."

So how did Charlie overcome it? "We took a bit of a break, and I made a change in my drumset, adding a third tom up front. Ever since then, I'm back to my old self. I can't wait to get to the gig every night. I also made one *other* change," Charlie revealed. "I started wearing earplugs. All of a sudden, everything became clearer to my ears. The plugs take away that annoying high-end noise, and now everything sounds much fuller to me."

Anthrax's last album, *Persistence Of Time,* went gold, and according to Charlie, "It was the most satisfying record we've done. I'm happy with everything from the cover art to the drum sound. We recorded at A&M studios in California, and the drum room was amazing! I was able to relax and record my parts in one or two takes. It all seemed very natural."

For more Anthrax fun, look for Charlie and the band on a just-released EP, *Attack Of The Killer B's,* a compilation of B sides from the band's past.

• ***William F. Miller***

Nick Menza

Megadeth has gone through several personnel changes since releasing their second album, *Peace Sells...But Who's Buying?* a few years ago. But with the recruitment of Nick Menza on last year's big-selling *Rust In Peace,* the drum slot looks to be permanently filled.

Menza is a fluid and melodic player who complements this already highly melodic thrash band. Nick had known Megadeth's founders (Dave Mustaine and Dave Ellefson) before joining the band. "I told them that I was perfect for the job," Nick jokes. "After the *So Far, So Good, So What* tour, I finally got the chance to go out on the road with them and do some soundchecks. I kind of nudged my way in from there. After the tour was over, the first thing I did was the single from *Shocker,* 'No More Mr. Nice Guy,' which turned out to be my studio audition. Everything fell together really well, and after that we started working on *Rust In Peace."*

A Los Angeles native, Menza grew up surrounded by musicians. (His father, Don Menza, is a well-known sax player.) "My Dad played with many jazz greats," Nick elaborates, "and for some reason people bring that up a lot, but I don't mind. People assume that I'm a jazz drummer myself, which I'm not."

The younger Menza was fortunate enough to cull drumming tips from the likes of Buddy Rich (who played with the elder Menza), and frequent house guests included Louie Bellson, Shelly Manne, and Nick Ceroli. "My Dad played with all of these people, so I got to chew the fat with some of the great jazz drummers. But even though I received a lot of tips, I was still pretty much self-taught, and despite all the jazz influences at home, I taught myself by playing to rock albums."

• ***Teri Saccone***

Horacee Arnold

There's always a risk when discussing Horacee Arnold's career—you're always bound to leave *something* out.

Recently Horacee has been commissioned to work with the Carolyn Dorfman Dance Company, composing music to the choreographer's dance/video project at the Morristown Museum in New Jersey. Though he's worked on dance projects in the past—notably with Alvin Ailey—this one is a bit different for the drummer. "All my stuff for this project is computer-oriented," he explains. "It's also the first time I've worked in the video medium, having to deal with things like fitting the music to video frames. I had to think in terms of the music being part of the dance so that the two things interface, and so the music doesn't take away from the dance, but rather *enhance* it."

Another project taking much of Horacee's attention is a rock/fusion group called Triquad, featuring keyboardist Oscar Derek Brown, Jr., guitarist Ronnie Drayton, and bassist Stomu Takashi. Yamaha has agreed to sponsor the group on a tour of Japan, which should also spawn video and audio productions. "It's like a hard-edged rock thing," Horacee explains. "But I'm writing some pieces for it that are a bit more fusion-oriented. It's going to be open-ended in terms of playing: There's going to be a lot of textural stuff, lots of duets, trios, and then group things. I'll be playing drums as well as a MIDI controller called the *J Factor.* You wear it around you, and it looks like a fish. It has eleven pads for each hand, and you can trigger almost anything from it."

Though Horacee has been primarily known for his acoustic jazz work and his classic fusion project *Tales Of The Exonerated Flea,* a few years ago he decided that he should do some concentrated delving into the electronic world. "I wanted to get my head into understanding electronics in terms of applying it to what I already know as a composer and as a jazz musician. I wanted to find out how much time I wanted to put into the programming aspect of it versus actually playing things with my mind and hands. So I'm using the electronics as an auxiliary slave to the acoustics. I don't want it to dominate."

The result of this study has come out in much of Horacee's recent work, including his sporadic duets with William Calhoun. ("The kid is busy!" says Horacee.) In addition, Horacee has continued giving clinics and teaching at William Paterson College, working with his own quartet, and working on putting together a live tribute to Papa Jo Jones. "I've talked to Dennis Chambers, and Jack DeJohnette is interested," Horacee says. "You know, Art Blakey is gone now, and pretty soon there will be a whole generation that's gone, and we won't be able to replace it."

•***Adam J. Budofsky***

Johnny Austin

Drummer/songwriter Johnny Austin is turning a bit of good fortune into a smart career move. After years of playing clubs and writing songs around his native Philadelphia, Johnny caused a bit of a stir last year with his single release, "Save The Children." This self-produced, socially conscious song did well on local radio and in local sales, to the point where there is now interest in him on several different levels.

Even before the single was released, Johnny had enough material written to complete an album. "The songs are pretty much mainstream rock, with some pop-type ballads mixed in. From a drumming standpoint it's just good solid groove material. Lyrically it's material I think people can relate to, even though the songs may not be as involved as 'Save The Children.' I like to write things that are spiritually uplifting."

Currently Johnny is rehearsing a new band to take into the studio to complete his album, with the plan being to have it released by the end of the year. According to Johnny, "The bottom line is, I really love the drums. I've realized that no matter what level you're at in this business, you can make a statement of your own." Speaking of making a statement, Johnny has recently finished authoring a book based on the music business and how motivation affects a musician's career. With all of his activities, you can tell *this* gentleman is motivated.

• ***Frederick Bay***

Chad Rager

Chad Rager was very excited when his band, Rager, was asked to perform at a benefit for an emergency tap dancer fund established after his friend and mentor, dancer Steve Condos, passed away. Participating in the event (headlined by Gregory Hines in New York) was an honor for Chad due to his close affiliation with Condos.

"I came in contact with him when I was in Florida," Chad explains from his home in Ohio. "I had always been a tap dancing fan, so I went to see him and started bugging him to let me study with him. Steve would let me come to his house, and we would talk about rhythms and how they related to tap and drums. I found out he was really good friends with Buddy Rich; they practiced together when Buddy was really young. Steve gave me a lot of insight into rhythmic placement and overall musical knowledge. He literally became my musical father.

"I had always told Steve that when I was in the position, I'd want him to record with me. We wrote a tune for him called 'Mr. Watchit,' which is kind of a funk tune. That was his nickname. He didn't drive, but he'd sit in the passenger seat going, 'Watch it, watch it.'

"On the record, we had Steve dance through the whole tune, doing some rhythm dancing in the solo section. On 'Rumor Has It,' he and I trade some fours in the end. It's really unfortunate that he passed away, because he was going to come on the road with us and dance. I was having a MIDI floor made for him, and he was going to trigger all kinds of percussion sounds."

"Mr. Watchit," off the Sisapa release *Observations,* is one of Chad's favorite tunes, as is "St. Bernard," a tribute to Buddy Rich that Chad brought to the band. Chad says that the material on the record is mostly a collaborative effort. "Bob Murnahan, our guitar player, writes lots of the raw stuff," he explains, "everyone puts their two cents worth in, and it turns into a collective piece."

• ***Robyn Flans***

News...

Tony Braunagel on tracks from Bonnie Raitt's new album **(Ricky Fatar** also on the album), as well as on some Johnny Rivers sessions.

Kenny Malone on Kathy Mattea's new album, along with percussionist **Tom Roady.**

Doane Perry on the new Jethro Tull LP, with a tour to follow shortly. He also did some recording with Peter Cetera, Chastity Bono, Anthony Michael Hall, and Alex Smith, and can be seen in his new instructional video, *Creative Listening* (distributed by Paiste). Finally, congratulations to Doane on his recent wedding to Heather.

Enzo Tedesco working with Gino Vannelli.

James Kottak now with the Cult.

Michael Barsimanto and Vinnie Colaiuta on new Wishful Thinking LP.

Billy Block on *King Cake Party* by Doug Lacey & the Zydeco Party Band. The project was produced by **Jim Keltner.**

The wonderful **Michael Blair** on a Lou Reed track for a film project by Wim Wenders.

Randy Castillo working on *Ozzy* Osbourne's next LP.

Jeff Simon on new George Thorogood album, *Boogie People.*

Mike Bordin in the studio with Faith No More, looking at an album release date of late summer or early fall.

Brian Kitt on tour and on a new record with R.E.O. Speedwagon.

Harvey Sorgen is currently on tour with Hot Tuna, supporting their new release, *Pair A Dice Found,* on Epic Records. Harvey can also be heard on *Ear Theater,* the new release by Mallards on Ottava Records.

Vito Bono on new release by King Of The Hill.

Chico Hamilton, with his group Euphoria, has been working steadily of late. Chico's newest release, *Arroyo,* is just out on Soul Note Records, and later this year *Reunion* will be released, a session done in Milano, Italy featuring the original Chico Hamilton Quintet.

Wally Stryk is currently working in and around L.A. with ex-Mothers keyboard player Don Preston, as well as in MiWoDeke, a band featuring Ghanian master-drummer **Alfred Ladzekpo.**

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Eric Carr

Q Congratulations on the *Hot In The Shade* album. I'd like to know how and when you got into drumming and what type of drums, cymbals, heads, pedals, and sticks you started with. Also, do you ever worry about losing your hearing, and do you use ear protection? Finally, what type of drums, cymbals, heads, pedals, mic's, and sticks were used on *Hot In The Shade*?

Tim Betts
Pembroke MA

A I got into drumming in 1964, when I was 14. The Beatles had just come out and I just got blown away by the style and sound of Ringo's drums. I never even thought about drums before that, but from then on I didn't think of anything else. My first kit was a real piece of junk called "Zimgar" that was made back when "Made in Japan" meant "no good." My first real kit was a five-piece Ludwig (the same color as Ringo's), with any cymbals I could afford and a *Speed King* pedal.

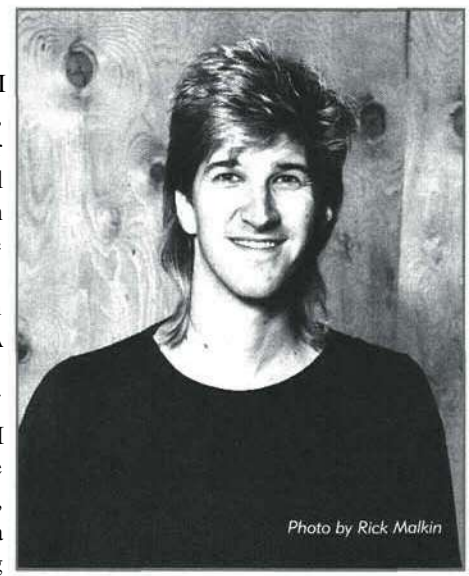
To protect my ears I wear plugs called *E.A.R. Hearing Protectors.* They look like little marshmallows. They're squishy, foam plugs that you roll up and put into your ear. They expand to fit. They're great and *absolutely necessary.* And I think they make the drums sound *heavier.*

On *H.I.T.S.* I used some Simmons pads on some songs, but mostly two 24" kicks, 8", 10", 12", 14", 15", and 16" rack toms, an 18" floor tom, and an 8 1/2 x 14 snare—all by Ludwig. All the drums are fitted with Remo clear *Emperor* heads. My cymbals are all Paiste *2002s.* The kick pedals are Drum Workshop *DW5000s,* and I use Regal Tip *2B* sticks with "Coban" wrap around the grip end.

Chad Wackerman

Q I was at a clinic you did recently, and I remember you saying that during practice, we should stop and rest for a short while when our muscles start to hurt, because if we don't we'll damage our muscles. However, I've always been taught "No pain, no gain." Would you please explain?

Matt McClain
Walnut Creek CA



A During my clinics, I usually show some of the roll strokes and single strokes that I use when I practice or warm up. One of these exercises, which I learned from Murray Spivack, involves playing 16th-note single strokes with a metronome at one tempo for five minutes, raising the tempo for another five minutes, then raising it again for a final five minutes. I always tell students when they play this exercise to make the final tempo (the fastest one) a speed that is comfortable to play. If you try to play faster than you are able to for long periods of time, you may do some damage to your hands.

I remember going to my first drum clinic as a kid, watching Louie Bellson play things I never imagined possible: single strokes sounding like closed rolls, paradiddles, Swiss army triplets, and all of the rudiments—faster, yet much more musical than I had ever heard before. I remember Louie saying that the faster he played, the more relaxed he needed to be. As young drummers, we are usually impatient, wanting to be able to play as fast as possible as soon as possible. Speed comes with time. Keep working on your rudiments, but never try to play them so fast that your muscles get sore—or worse, you feel your hands cramp up. As I said, if you feel any tension, stop, take a break for a few minutes, then try again—but slower and more relaxed. It will pay off in the long run.

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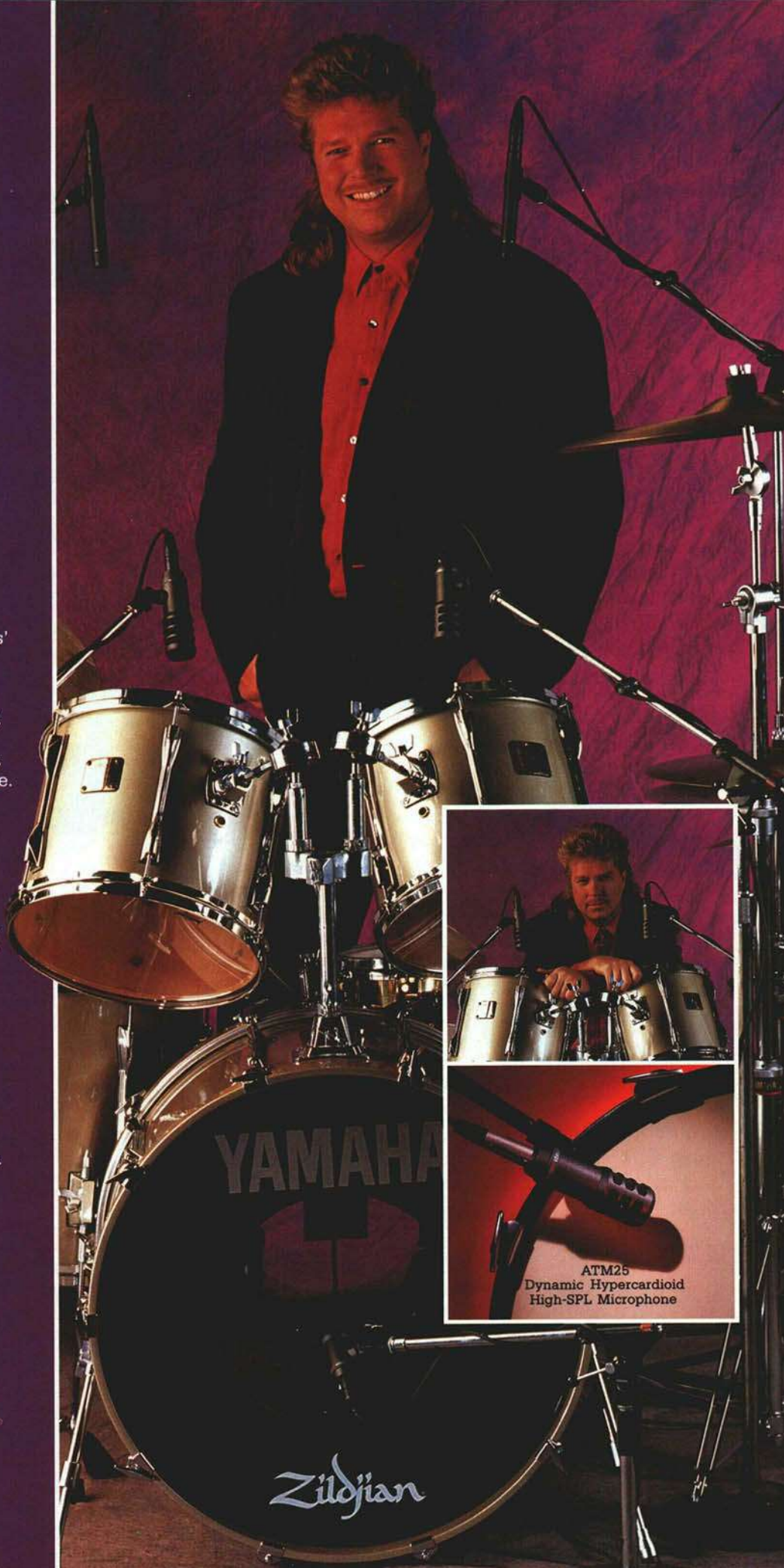

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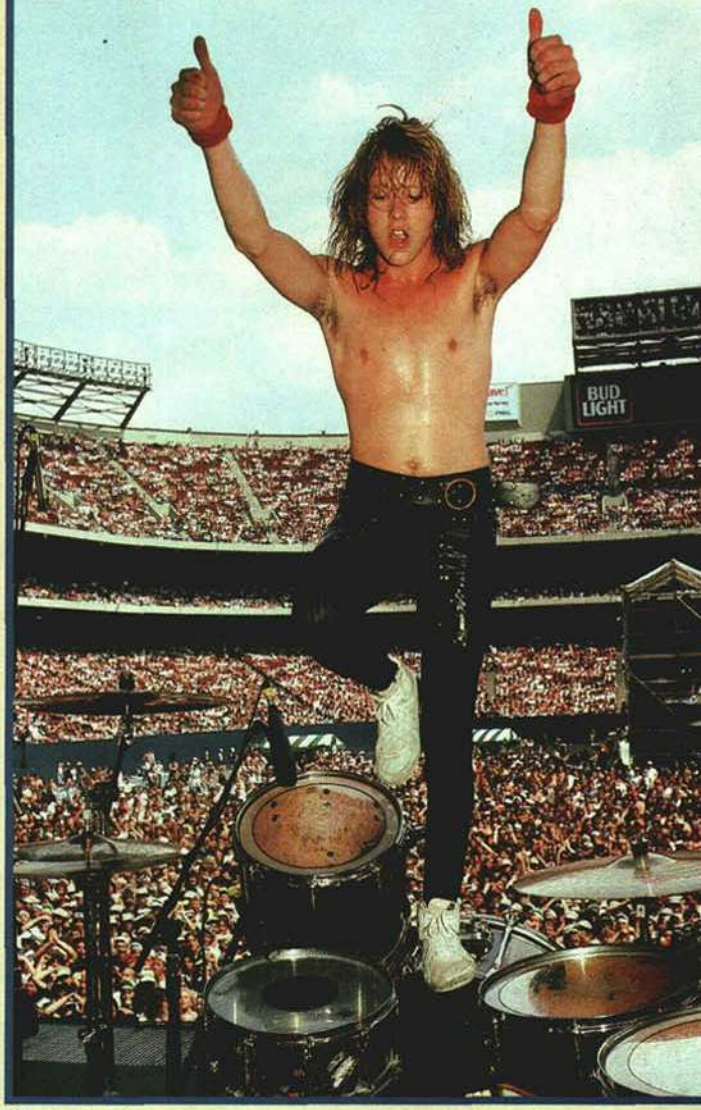

Photo by Mark Weiss

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IT'S QUESTIONABLE

Q Cracks Due To Cymbal Springs?

A few years ago I purchased a couple of Aquarian *Cymbal Springs.* Over the next couple of years, I broke three crash cymbals. I'm not a real heavy hitter, although I've broken an occasional thin crash during heavy gigs. But these three crashes were broken at the same points: running in the direction of the grooves and halfway between the center hole and the edge. I didn't link the problem to the *Springs* until other drummers I know had similar problems. I am convinced now that the *Springs* are the culprit.

When a cymbal is struck on a normal stand, it responds of its own accord—swinging down from stick impact—then its own weight swings it back and forth until it stops. When the same cymbal is suspended on a *Cymbal Spring* and struck, two forces come into effect: the stick pushing down, and the *Spring* simultaneously pulling up. The cymbal is forced upright faster than it wants to go, causing stress in the area between the edge and the bell. I never strike a crash in this area, and I don't know anyone who does, which leads me to conclude that these are "stress cracks."

I stopped using the *Springs* two years ago, and have not had any broken cymbals since. I don't expect cymbal reimbursement, but I would like to hear what Roy Burns has to say about this situation.

Matt Curren
Mays Landing NJ

A Roy responds: "First of all, you don't tell us what kind of cymbals were broken. Secondly, my experience has been that when a cymbal cracks in the area you describe, it's very often due to bad packing, or some other type of problem.

You theorize that the *Spring* 'sets up a second force that pulls the cymbal back up too quickly.' The implication is that this somehow causes the cymbal to fatigue. Upon receipt of your question, I spent two hours with an engineer evaluating this possibility, and we came to the conclusion that this just doesn't happen. When you hit a traditionally mounted crash cymbal, it hits the center post of the stand and is stopped abruptly. If you hit through the cymbal, you'll eventually crack it. The *Cymbal Spring* allows a cymbal that has been hit through to move 'out of the way.' The *Spring,* in itself, puts no stress on the cymbal whatsoever. So there is simply no such thing as a 'stress crack' caused by a *Cymbal Spring."*

Q Yamaha Snare Sets?

I have a Yamaha brass snare drum with individually adjustable cable snares. The drum is perfect for some situations, but most of the time I have to use normal wire snares. The snare mechanism is great and it is easy to remove the snares. It would be perfect if I had different snare sets to choose from, like brass snares, combination gut/wire, etc. I have not been able to find what I have described above in any Yamaha catalog. Does Yamaha make optional snares for this drum?

Bjorn Danielsen
Kristiansand, Norway

A The only alternative snares for your drum offered by Yamaha are synthetic gut snares called *Fibertech.* According to Yamaha, these have been used with great success by various drum corps as an alternative to cable. They are available by special order from any Yamaha dealer.

Q Speed-King Heel-Plate Rattle?

I recently purchased a Ludwig *Speed-King* pedal, and like its action very much. However, I find that when it is played in the heel-up mode, the heel mechanism rattles most annoyingly—even if the reversible heel plate is taped. I would have thought that after all the years that this pedal has been available, Ludwig would have done something to alleviate this problem. Is there something that can be done to fix it?

George Taylor
Mount Hunter, Australia

A What works well in the three problem areas of the Ludwig *Speed-King* that traditionally cause problems is a commercial product called *Chain Lube* in the U.S. (A similar product should be available in Australia, perhaps under a different brand name.) Designed for use on motorcycle chains, chain-driven electric motors, etc., it comes in a spray form, with a small tube to direct the spray. To solve your particular problem, spray the heel of the pedal so that the product runs down along the pin that goes through the heel. (For drummers using chain pedals, also spray the points at which the chain hooks onto the sprocket or beater casting and where it connects to the toe of the pedal.) The advantage of this product is that it actually adheres to the surface and takes a very long time to wear off. In fact, each time the pedal moves it tends to reactivate the lubricating properties of the *Chain Lube.* This property helps it to reduce the clicking sound you refer to in the heel assembly of the *Speed-King.*

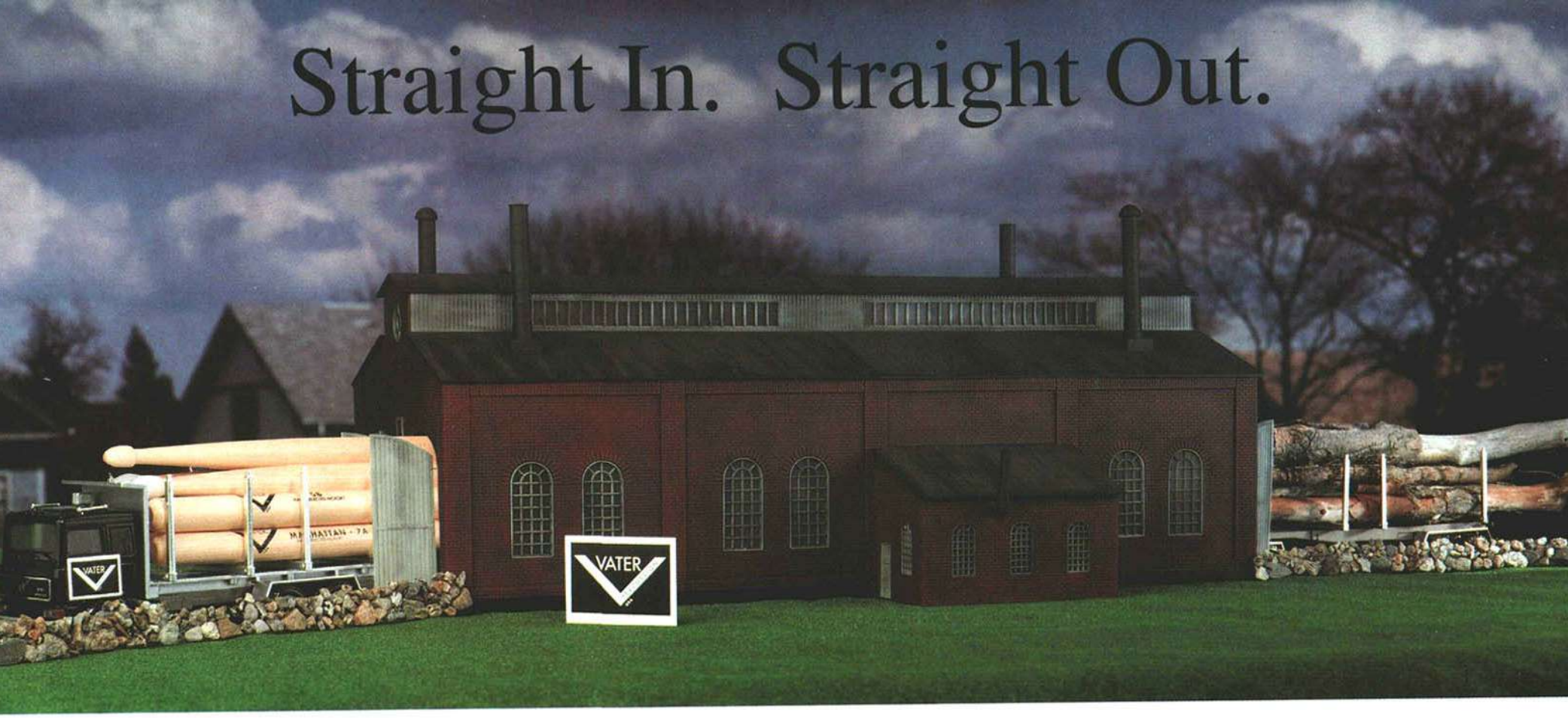
Q Old-Sounding Zildjians?

I have an old 20" Zildjian K Concert Band Crash. It was my father's, and he has recordings on which he used this cymbal as a ride. Over the years, it has lost its "ping" quality and has taken on a "trashy" crash sound with a long duration. I was wondering if Zildjian markets a crash that may coincide with my old K

Kelly Minnis
Nashville TN

A Your Timing is excellent.Zildjian has just introduced a new line of "pre-aged" K cymbals. See this month's *Product Close-Up* for a review.

Straight In. Straight Out.



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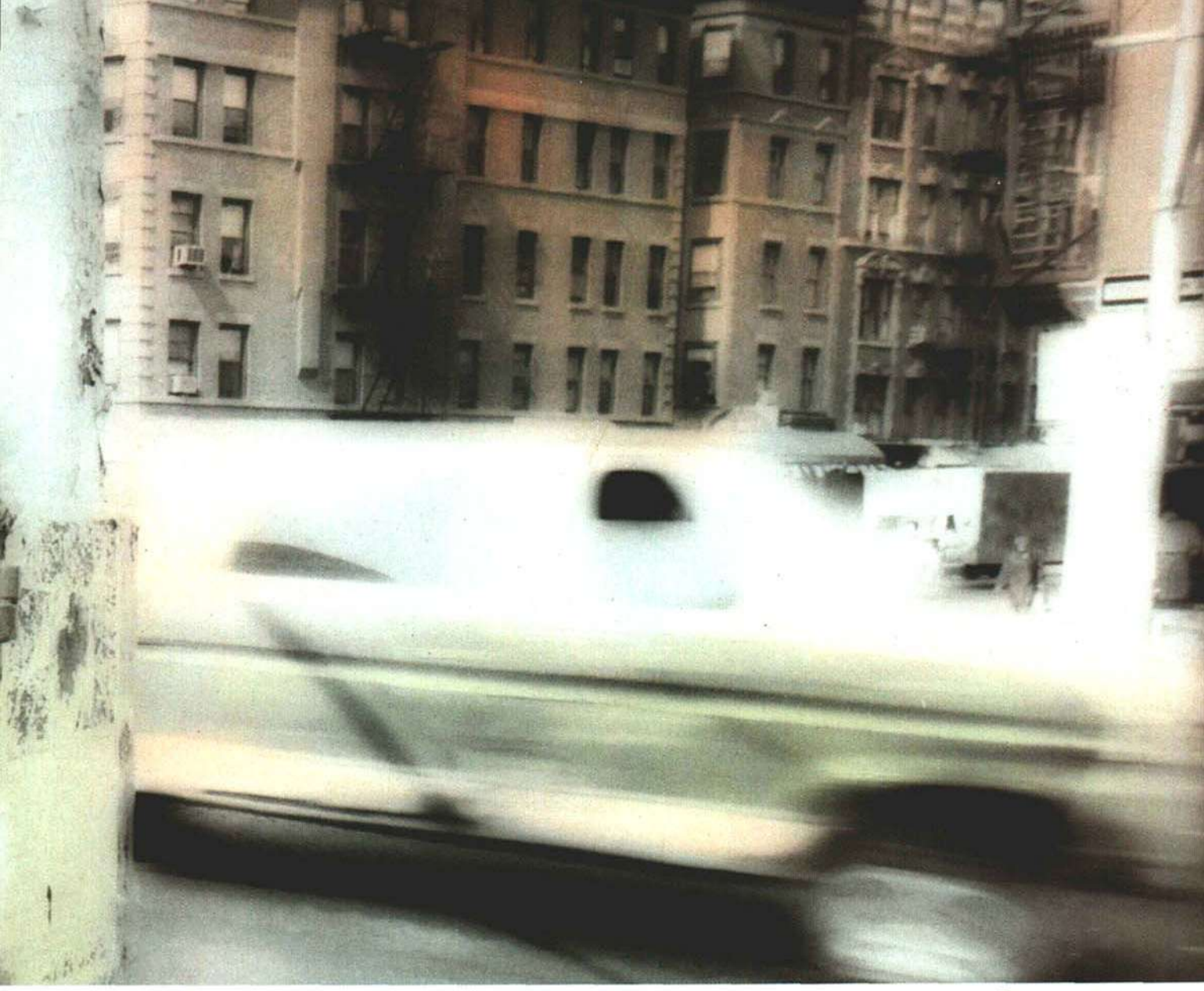

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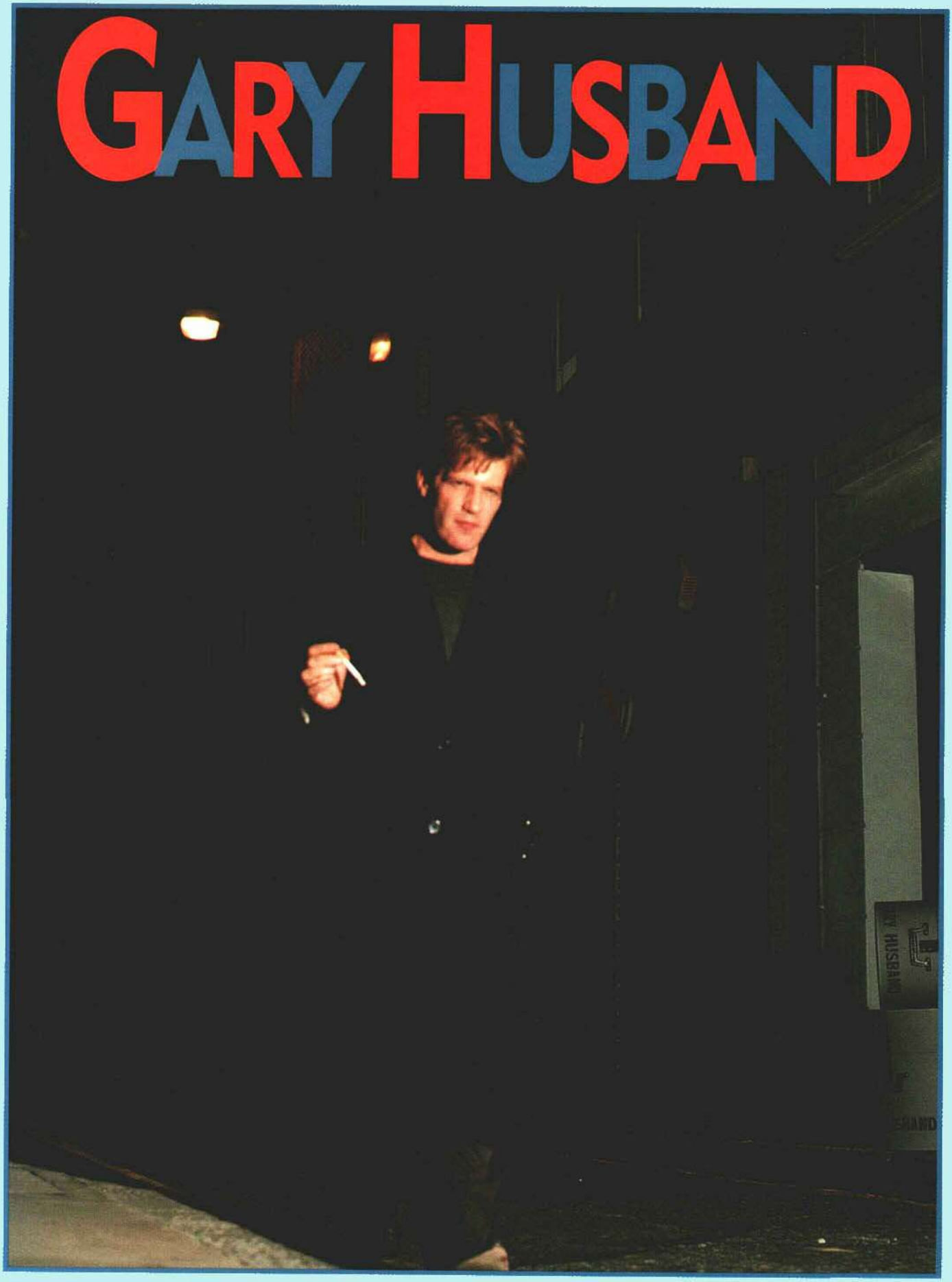


VERSATILITY UNMATCHED: FROM HOLDSWORTH TO LEVEL 42

When Level 42 bandleader/bassist Mark King phoned Gary Husband in September '87 to ask him to take over for Phil Gould, Gary reluctantly refused. There were commitments with Allan Holdsworth's band that were going to keep him in America for the rest of that year. Mark was probably prepared for this, though, because he immediately offered to keep the drum chair warm for Gary until the following January, when he would be able to join. After adding guitarist Alan Murphy to the line-up of Mark, Gary, and keyboardist Mike Lindup, the new Level 42 was set to roll.

The subsequent album, Staring At The Sun, *went platinum in the U.K., but didn't have the hoped-for success in America. This was a relatively minor setback in the course of the band's career, one that they were quite prepared to overcome. But then came a disaster, the tragic death of guitarist Alan Murphy. Still reeling from this tragedy months later, when they came to start work on their latest album,* Guaranteed, *the band found themselves reluctant to bring in a permanent replacement for him. The interesting result of this is that Allan Holdsworth was invited to play on the record, and also on the subsequent tour.*

By Simon Goodwin

Photos by Andy Earl

Gary Husband's first professional job, at the age of 16, was with the Syd Lawrence Orchestra, accurately recreating the popular big band music of the '30s and '40s. Avoiding becoming typecast either as a big band drummer or as nostalgia stylist, he went on to play in a variety of musical situations, many of which required him to push forward the boundaries of conventional music. He found what has, up to now, been the ultimate vehicle for his inventive talents in Allan Holdsworth's IOU. It was as a member of this band that he found himself working primarily in America (and making quite a name for himself). He retained his English roots, but at the time of the invitation to join Level 42, he was seriously considering settling permanently in the U.S.A.

As if being endowed with far more than the average person's drumming talent isn't enough, Gary is also an accomplished pianist/keyboard player. He also plays guitar, composes, and arranges, and has used all these abilities at a top professional level in the course of his career. Despite his versatility and consummate musicianship, it hasn't always been easy for Gary; he has had his share of difficult times and disappointments. The fact is, though, he has never lost faith in himself or lost his determination to succeed as a musician. Having achieved artistic success and credibility with Allan Holdsworth, he has now enjoyed commercial success with Level 42. All things considered, I can only say that it couldn't have happened to a more deserving or, incidentally, nicer guy.

SG: It's interesting that Mark King invited you into Level 42 to be part of the creative team, despite the fact that you were known for playing quite a different style of music. He might have been expected to get somebody who would lay down a groove like Phil Gould, and otherwise just do things to order.

GH: If Mark had said to me, "Look, we want you to sound as close to Phil as you can," I wouldn't have wanted to join. Because, although I am quite happy to recreate certain drum styles in the spirit of *authenticating* musical styles from the past, this isn't something from the past, it's Level 42 *now*. That's what I'll represent to the best of my ability. Mark seems to have the philosophy that he will approach musicians for the individual way they play. He has to make decisions that are compatible with the musical and business pressures on him, and I respect him greatly for that. He has a record company breathing down his neck, expecting him to come up with a product that is going to work in a "pop" way. He hired me over the phone, on the strength of what he had heard on Allan Holdsworth's albums, because he had the unshakable belief that it would work. He was right—it does work—but I wouldn't have known before we tried it. [laughs]

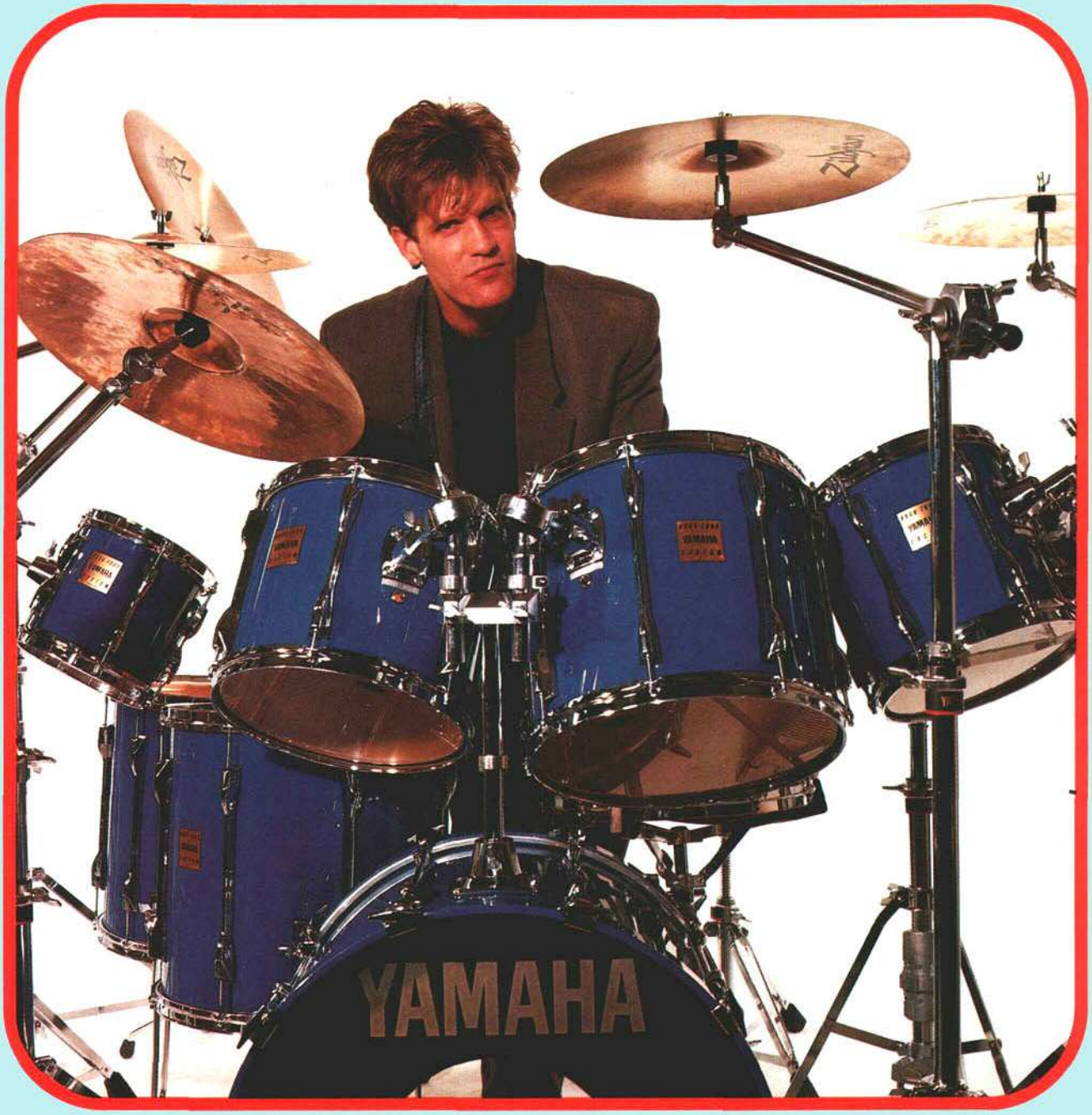
There was no pressure on me to copy anything that Phil had done. When it came to doing the old stuff, Mark just said, "Do what you think is right, and if there's anything we think needs tidying up, we can discuss it afterwards." He trusted me, and it worked out. It was good to be able to approach the old music in my own way, while maintaining what I felt was important about what Phil had set up.

With the new material on *Guaranteed,* I'm as much involved with the writing as anybody else in the band. I'm very proud of that. Collectively it's our baby. I do a piano solo on a number called "Her Big Day," which I'm very pleased about, because I would like people to be aware of my piano playing. I've been involved with the keyboard textures, I've written some of the lyrics, and I've done vocal harmonies and some unison leads.

SG: Is the keyboard stuff just you and Mike, or is Wally Badarou involved as well?

GH: Yeah, Wally is also involved. He has been on most of Level 42's records. He is fantastic with computers, and great at bringing out moods with sound textures. That's his role in the band. Mike has done a bit more performance on this album—leaving a minimum of sequenced stuff on there. Most of the percussion is performed "live" using drums. I've also triggered some snare drum sounds from the ddrums, plus there were some other triggered snare sounds added at the mastering stage. We used some sampled bass drum sounds to reinforce the acoustic drum track, but the toms and cymbals are all "live." There's very little sequenced stuff.

SG: Are you doing the percussion?



GH: There's a B-side called "The Ape" on which Mike plays some ddrum percussion; there's also some LP toys played by Mike and Wally on "Set Me Up." But all the rest of the congas, bongos, and stuff was performed "live" by me using the ddrum pads and samples. Now that I've started working with LP, I look forward to using more of their stuff for live work, in conjunction with my drumset.

SG: It's interesting that you can get the congas sounding so authentic. Do you use hands or sticks, and do you need more than one pad to get the different sounds that you would normally get from one conga drum?

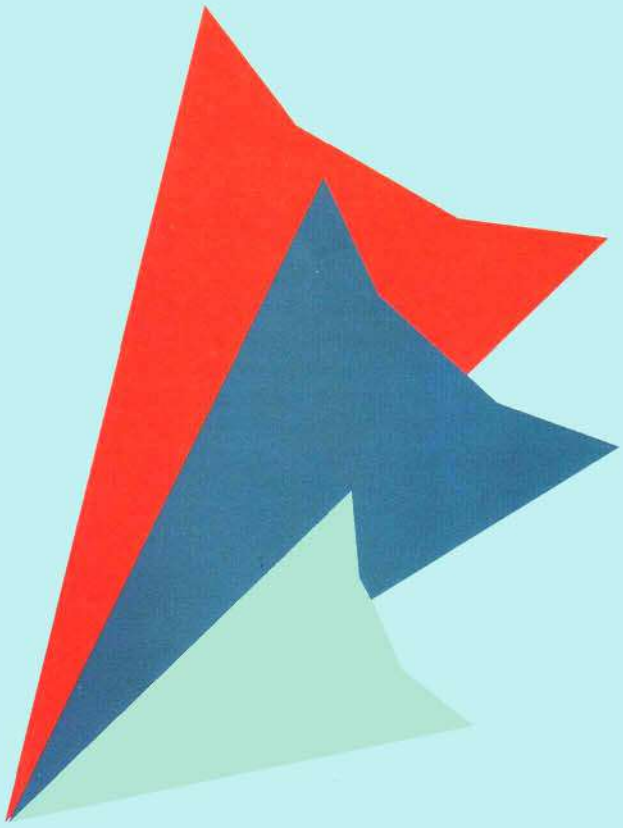
GH: They are sensitive enough to cover one drum per pad, and I play them with sticks. As far as having them sounding convincing and authentic—well, we keep them pretty low in the mix, [laughs]

SG: How do you work this into live performances?

GH: We use sequencers quite a large percentage of the time. There's bass reinforcement, added percussion—because we don't carry a percussionist—and keyboard reinforcement. We perform to that, despite its ups and downs. It's similar to working with a click in the studio, although I have experienced problems with the sequencer coming through a series of "generations" in the live setting. There are sometimes difficulties synchronizing the click with the sequencers. There have been times when I have *known* that the click is behind, and it's been making me play behind. This puts all the sequenced percussion ahead.

SG: I would have thought it would be crucial to get that spot on.

GH: It is, but there are conflicting opinions as to what *is* spot on—let's put it that way. [smiles and shrugs] When it's right, it's fine. You need to be able to play *off* the click, and I find that in order to do that it needs to be just that fraction ahead. I want it to sound as natural and organic as it can, and sometimes it just doesn't make it because of where the click is situated in relation to the music you are hearing. I can't really analyze the chemistry between myself and the click, but sometimes it can make me sound as if I'm behind the beat, and



sometimes it makes me sound as if I'm ahead.

SG: You must spend most of your mental energy relating to the click and the sequencers, ra ther than relating to the rest of the band.

GH: That's true. For this reason I don't have very much of Mark's bass in my monitors; I don't have much of anybody performing anything live, it's mostly the sequenced information. I consider it most important for me to lock in with that, and then for everybody else to lock in with me. If you are using sequencers, that's the only way it can work.

SG: For somebody like yourself, who is used to playing in a high-profile situation, this may seem like a crass question—but isn't this a rather sterile way to operate?

GH: Yes, I suppose it is, but you have to make the best of any situation. A lot of bands work this way these days. It would be nice to switch everything off. I would feel very comfortable going out without the sequencers. I think that I have got good enough time for everything to sound fine, and I think that everybody else in the band has got good time. Of course, we would need to carry a lot more musicians to make the live performances sound like the records, so....

SG: Would you say that most of your creativity happens in the studio, while your live playing consists of going through routines with machines?

GH: There are a couple of numbers in the set when the sequencers are switched off, namely "Love Games" and "Chinese Way," and a bit of a jam at the end of the show. But creatively, I am very involved in this album, much more than I was with *Staling At The Sun.* I have been able to use all my capabilities. It's exciting to work day by day, adding bits, and then coming back the next day and finding that some things have worked and some things haven't.

Staring At The Sun was done very quickly—too quickly. The band had been touring for a long time. Mark and Mike hadn't been home for ages, but they had been writing new material. There was a feeling of wanting to get it done, although everybody was feeling good about it at the time. I can't say, though, that I'm *as* pleased with that as I have been with other things that I've done.

I would like to have spent a lot longer on the drums, because in this day and age, if you are going to play acoustic drums on a pop album, they're going to have to be great. There's no way around it. With machines and triggering and

The Level Of Excellence

The following are the albums Gary says most represent his drumming

Album Title	Artist	Label/Catalog #
IOU	Allan Holdsworth	Enigma 73252
Metal Fatigue	Allan Holdsworth	Enigma 73222
Atavachron	Allan Holdsworth	Enigma 73203
Sand	Allan Holdsworth	Relativity A 1521
A Certain Kind Of Freedom	various	Polydor/Urban 841923-2
Southern Reunion	Mo Foster	Relativity **
Guaranteed	Level 42	Polydor **

These are the albums Gary listens to most for inspiration

Album Title	Artist	Drummer	Label/Catalog #
Frank Sinatra Sings Only For The Lonely		Irv Cottler	Capitol C21K-48471
"Four" & More	Miles Davis	Tony Williams	Columbia PCT-09253
Birds Of Fire	Mahavishnu Orchestra	Billy Cobham	Columbia PCT-31996
Something/Anything?	Todd Rundgren	Todd Rundgren	Rhino 71107
A Love Supreme	John Coltrane	Elvin Jones	MCA/Impulse 5660
In The Jungle Groove	James Brown	Clyde Stubblefield	Polydor 829624
A Handful Of Beauty	Shakti	Zakir Hussain and T.H. Vinayakaram	Columbia PC 34372*

** numbers not available as of press time
* out of print

the amount of perfectly quantized percussion and drums that you hear in today's music, you've got to make sure that your act is clean. Everybody notices now. There's a new awareness of perfect time, and as drummers we have to be on top of it.

SG: Don't you ever yearn for the old-fashioned method of just going into the studio and performing a number?

GH: I've always been a great fan of Mitch Mitchell, who was with Jimi Hendrix, and just recently I've had the opportunity to get to know him. You hear about how in the '60s they used to make an album in an afternoon; it's quite incredible. In a funny way, some of those albums with Allan Holdsworth were like that.

When we did *Atavachron,* I was suffering from jet lag. I got a cassette of the material a day before going into the studio. We went in, spent a day recording—plus maybe about half of the following day—and that was it. "Welcome to this new piece of music...Play it...Thank you and good night!" [laughs]

Working on *Guaranteed* has been especially nice, because Mark has his own studio now. We were able to work the hours we wanted to. We could go all through the night if we felt like it, or just do a few minutes in the afternoon and then leave it. There were no time pressures at all. I suppose I'm going to get used to working like this now, and everything else will be unbearable.

SG: Allan Holdsworth plays guitar on *Guaranteed.* How did that come about?

GH: Well, as you know, we lost Alan Murphy. That's been a great blow to all of us, because he was a great friend as well as a great player. We're still reeling from that sad loss. The very, very hard job that has been facing us is to replace him.

It was Mark's idea to give Allan Holdsworth a call to see whether he would be interested, and I had to think very hard about whether Allan would be willing. He has a perfectionist's view of everything he does. If he were to play on a Level 42 album, he would have to be certain that everything he did would fit perfectly. Another thing worrying me was that I knew that when he performs a solo, he doesn't like other band members in the control room. But to my amazement, he came in with a basic setup, got a monstrous guitar sound, and started playing incredible things to our music. I wouldn't have thought it would have worked so well, but it did. He gave his strong personal magic to that music, but nothing was out of place. He heard the music for what it was.

It was a strange experience listening to the playbacks. There was the sound of Allan's guitar and my drums together, which is something I am used to hearing. Then there was the sound of my playing with Mark and Mike, which is something else I'm used to. *Now* I was hearing the whole lot together!

SG: I understand he will be touring with you as well. Does this mean that Allan Holdsworth is *the* Level 42 guitarist?

GH: When it was discussed that he might play on the record, it wasn't even contemplated that he might do some live work as well—simply by virtue of his commitment to his own record label and his own schedule. Also, Level 42 obviously needs a guitarist who is highly rhythmic, which isn't Allan's area. So I wouldn't have thought that him touring with us would have come about at all—until Allan said to me one night, "You can tell Mark that if he can't find anybody, I'd love to give it a go." I was completely gobstruck! [laughs]

SG: When your last *Modern Drummer* interview appeared [Jan '87], you were entering a rather uncertain period in your

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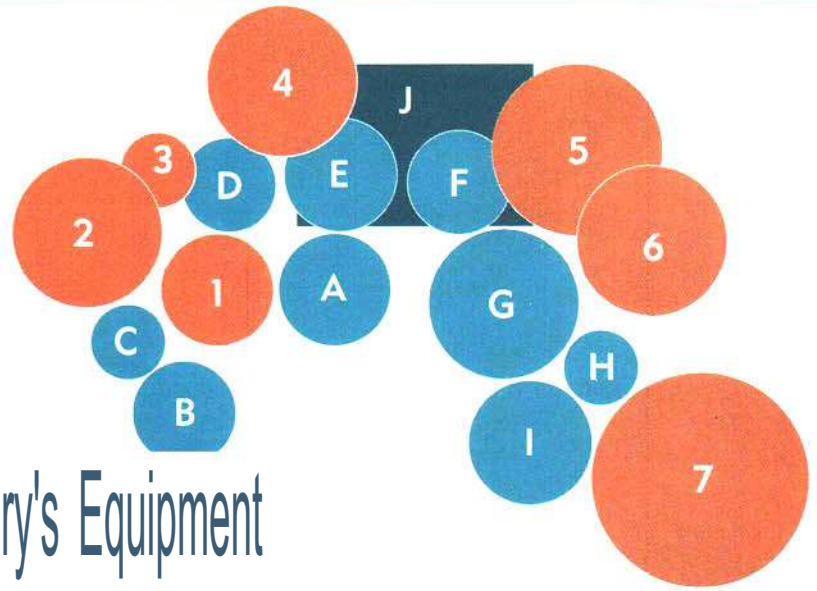
Gary's Equipment



Drumset: Yamaha *Rock Tour Custom* series
A. 5 x 14 brass snare
B. 3 1/2X13 Ocheltree maple piccolo
C. 8 x 8 tom
D. 10 x 10 tom
E. 12x14 tom
F. 10 x 12 tom
G. 16 x 18 floor tom
H. 8 x 8 tom
I. 16x16 floor tom
J. 16 x 22 bass drum

Cymbals: Zildjian 1.14" Quick Beat hi-hats
2. 17" thin crash
3. 8" splash
4. 18" thin crash
5. 20" Z power ride
6. 18" thin crash
7. 22" *China Boy* low

Hardware: All stock Yamaha (no racks), including a bass drum pedal with a wood beater

Heads: Remo coated *Ambassador* on snare, *Pinstripes* on tops of toms and bass drum batter (with only a towel for muffling), clear *Ambassadors* on bottoms of toms

Sticks: Pro-Mark natural finish *5A*

Electronics: "I like ddrums, but not for live work with acoustic drums. I like to keep electronic and acoustic separate."

Matt Sorum

Guns N' Roses' New Stickman

Matt Sorum is pretty excited about joining one of heavy metal's most popular groups, Guns N' Roses. After one listen, you'd think their music was all Matt had ever played. He knows, however, it's all of his combined past experience—from high school band to a variety of pop sessions—that has prepared him for his success today.

"If you just listen to AC/DC or Deep Purple all day, that just doesn't give you a well-rounded idea of music," Matt asserts. "If you listen to John Bonham, he had a lot of R&B undertones; you can tell he could play any style. When I played with Gladys Knight, the groove that I did was basically rock over R&B. Rock drummers should listen to all different types of drumming. Gregg Bissonette got the David Lee Roth gig because he can play it all. I remember I once subbed for him at Disneyland on a Top-40 gig, and he had all of the music charted out, just to help me out. That gives you an idea that he knows more about things than most people realize.

"Everything I have learned over the years has come into play," Matt emphasizes. "My marching band experience came in handy when I was with the Cult and I had to play timpani. Years ago I played a lot of brushes in a jazz ensemble, and I just played a little brushes on the new Guns N' Roses album. These things all come back to help you."

By Robyn Flans

Photo by Jack White

RF: You've done a lot of recording, but I understand you were not interested in becoming a session drummer. How did it all start happening for you?

MS: The recording thing just kind of came out of necessity. I had some friends who were engineering for some big producers. One of my roommates went on to become a very happening engineer, and he was working as an assistant for [producer] Michael Lloyd, so I started doing all these kinds of bubble gum projects like Shaun Cassidy. I actually worked on Belinda Carlisle's first record, although the stuff I did didn't make it to the album. A lot of the movie things I did were with Michael Lloyd as well. I wasn't really a session drummer. I mean, when I went into it, my first session was pretty scary.

RF: What was it like?

MS: It was actually for something that *Playboy* did called *The Girls Of Rock 'N' Roll,* where they took all these playmates into the studio. It was kind of fun. The arranger, John D'Andrea, handed out the charts, but I hadn't read music since high school; I was a rock drummer. The chart wasn't really that hard to read, though. There were a couple of fills written. There were all these heavy session cats there, and it was six of us recording all at once. It was about 9:00 in the morning and I was just waking up. We started recording right away—no rehearsal, no nothing. And at about 15 bars in, I blew the fill. Michael Lloyd said, "Okay, pick it up from bar 15, I'll punch the whole band in," which is the way he works—fast. I was going, "Oh God." I was really nervous. The click track was going, and we made it through bar 15. Then I got to about bar 30, and I blew it again. At this point, I was freaking out. Everyone was looking at me.

Finally I got through the thing, and it was just done with a lot of punch-ins. We never actually played the tune all the way through. It took about ten, fifteen minutes. I was pretty nervous, but then Michael called me back, and we started working together. He liked my feel, I guess. And the bass player actually turned around at the end of the session and said, "I really liked playing with you," and he had played with *everyone.*

RF: Had you ever worked with a click before that?

MS: Actually I had, because in the late '70s, I got real into new wave, and I was in a band from Australia called IQ—I had my hair real short—the whole bit. We used nothing but drum machines and sequencers, although they were like the first sequencers that had come out. I used to play along with the drum machine, so I got into that, although it wasn't a click, per se.

RF: What about learning to get sounds

Photos By Jack White

in the studio at the beginning and learning how to play for the studio?

MS: Michael has a studio in his house where all the drums are set up. The only thing he said to me when I walked in and started playing was about the fact that I was hitting rimshots every time I hit a backbeat. I was really into nailing the rim like Stewart Copeland. But Michael said to hit it in the middle of the drum. That was a completely different thing for me. And he liked the snare tuned lower than I liked it. But those are the things you have to deal with with different producers. Lately I've been using a lot of different snares. On the Guns N' Roses album, I used 20 different snare drums to cut 35 tracks.

RF: Where had you learned to read?

MS: In high school I was in marching band and jazz ensemble. I actually took three band classes a day in high school. We could have three electives, and I picked all music—wind ensemble, jazz ensemble, marching band. And we had a really good drum corps at Mission Viejo High School. I played timp-toms.

RF: So you were into the learning process.

MS: Yeah, and wind ensemble in high school ended up being real cool for me, because on the Cult tour I used some timpani and gongs and stuff. A lot of rock players just sort of hit a gong; they don't know you have to warm it up. And guys don't know you have to tune timpani to the song. With the Cult there was a bass/timpani duet at the beginning of a song called "Sun King," off the *Sonic Temple* album. It was really cool: my timpani came out of the floor of the stage, and we did this little dueling thing, totally attuned to each other. So those things came in handy.

RF: Did you ever get into any formal lessons?

MS: I took some from Jay Wanamaker. In those days I wasn't really into the rudiment thing. I was just into playing hard rock. When I was in the eighth grade I had my first band, and I was totally into Black Sabbath. So I kind of got turned off to lessons until I got into marching band and that kind of stuff. Once I got into doing that, it took up a lot of my time. Marching band was two hours after school.

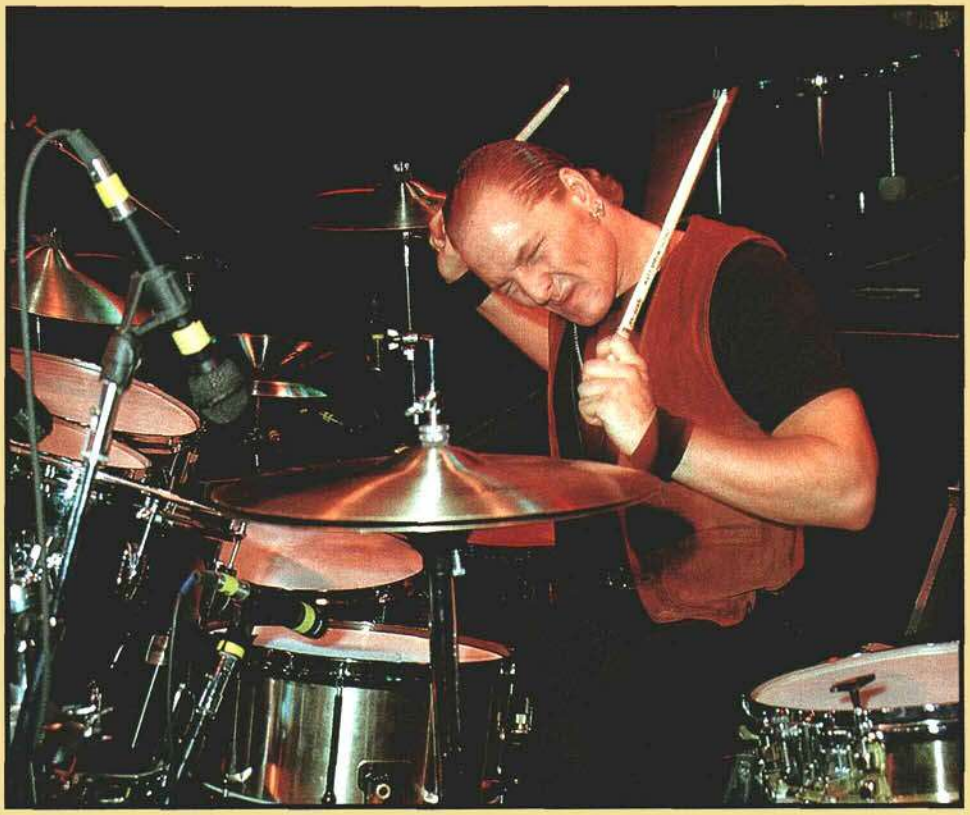


Photo By Lissa Wales

RF: So there were no more private lessons after that?

> "On the Guns N' Roses album, I used 20 different snare drums to cut 35 tracks."

MS: Not really. The only thing I did was attend jazz retreats and clinics and things. At home I played to records. In 1974, when I first got into high school, I really got into early Genesis and Gentle Giant—more progressive stuff. I wasn't really into Led Zeppelin until much later. I was more into the weird stuff like Gentle Giant, which helped me with my odd meters. I learned how to play in 7/4 and things like that in the ninth grade, because early Genesis was really into that.

RF: Who else were you into?

MS: I liked Deep Purple because they were kind of orchestral in a way. I liked everything with kind of a classical sound to it. Then I got into the early fusion drummers like Billy Cobham, Lenny White, and Tony Williams. I learned a lot from them, like playing real fast and applying rudiments to the drumkit. I went off in that direction for a while, but I came to the realization that I really couldn't compete with those guys, and I found my niche in rock 'n' roll. I kind of moved around for a while and couldn't figure out what my style was until I finally started getting a lot of calls from rock bands. I played new wave, country—everything.

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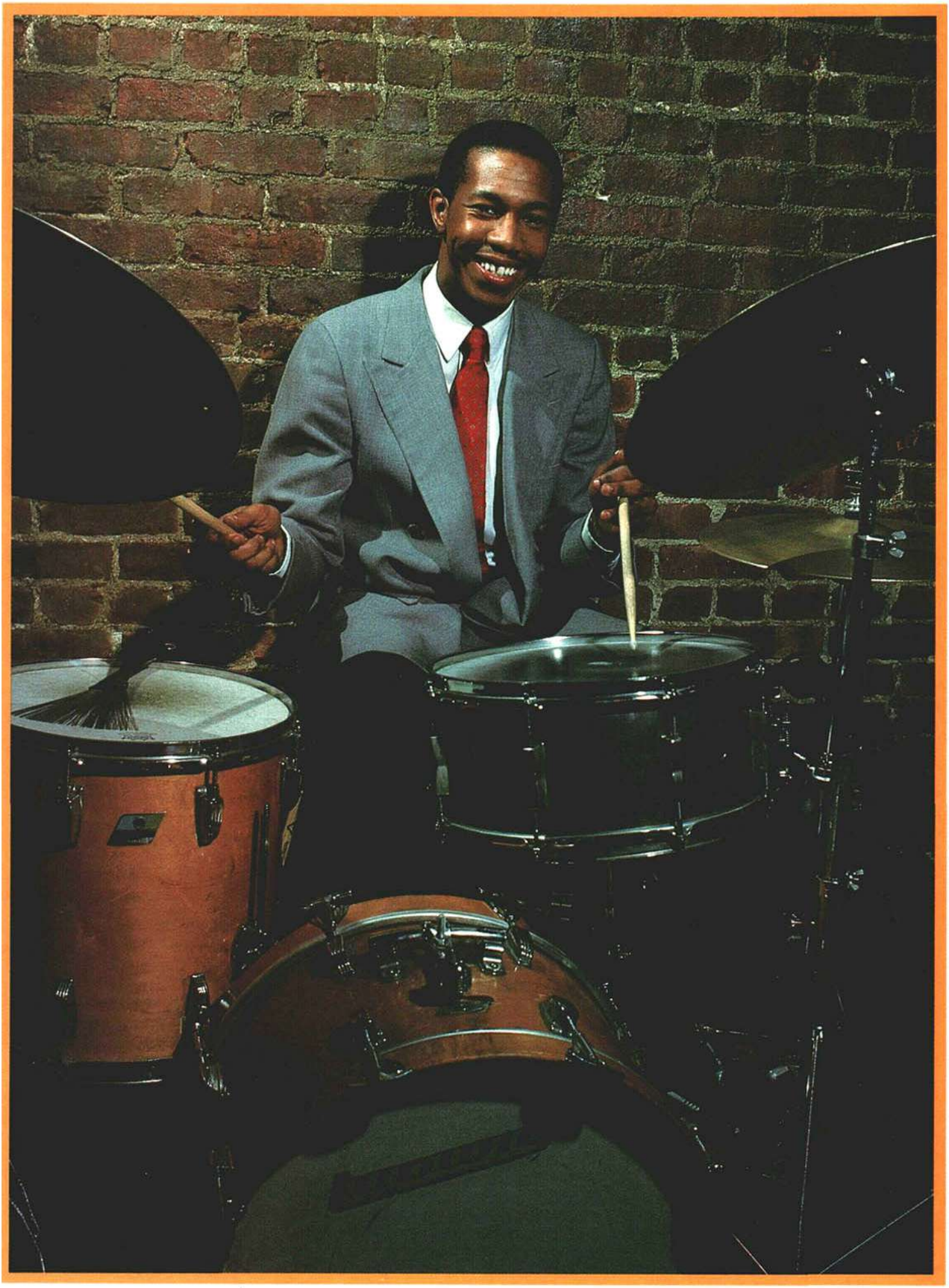


KENNY WASHINGTON

Manhattan's Underground Jazz Master

Kenny Washington is the jazz world's best kept secret. With over 80 albums to his credit, from Betty Carter to Benny Carter, Spike Lee soundtracks to Philly Joe Jones' "Dameronia," he is one of New York City's most in-demand drummers for both studio and live work.

Swinging in the illustrious, immaculate style of a Philly Joe Jones or Mel Lewis, Kenny brings his exacting standards to bear on every gig he plays. A true ensemble player, he is also an inspired soloist and a master of the lost art of brush playing. One is immediately struck by his ability to swing hard at any tempo or volume, and by his constant use of dynamics—a truly musical drummer.

Known for his stark honesty and an encyclopedic knowledge of jazz, Kenny is often contacted by record companies, concert promoters, and the like to verify jazz history or recording data. That knowledge has at times been intimidating to other musicians who, when sharing the same bandstand, attempt to fake their way through a piece of music not properly studied and digested, and find themselves experiencing the wrath of Kenny's high standards—a simple look will do.

This interviewer found Kenny Washington to be humorous, highly informative, and ready and willing to play records all night and help explain his deep love and commitment to America's only classical music: jazz.

BY KEN MICALLEF
PHOTOS BY EBET ROBERTS

KM: You're a native New Yorker, aren't you?

KW: I was born in Brooklyn and grew up in Staten Island.

KM: Why did you start playing the drums?

KW: My parents, especially my father, were into the music. I have to thank my parents, man. They steered me in the right direction. Growing up, I heard the best—Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Dizzy Gillespie, all kinds of stuff. When my dad wasn't around, I'd stay up late and play music. I was four years old, listening to music all the time. I listened to every drummer you can think of, copying off the records. Originally Vernell Fournier with Ahmad Jamal was the one who really inspired me to play. To this day, I try to get his sound when I'm playing brushes.

My father knew Rudy Collins, who had played with *Dizzy* in the early-to-mid '60s. He recorded *Dizzy Gillespie And The Double Six Go To Paris* and *On The French Riviera.* Rudy and my father were good friends. In 1970 Rudy was giving free lessons in Brooklyn as part of a group lesson program headed by saxophonist Bill Barron. Rudy was the first guy to show me how to play in 6/8 time, which he learned from *Dizzy.* Dizzy showed a lot of the drummers how to adapt Latin and Afro-Cuban rhythms to the drumset. He was instrumental in bringing in that influence through players like Chano Pozo and Mario Bauza.

KM: Were you a "practice-aholic" then?

KW: Oh yes. I learned a lot of the rudiments from listening to the records. I'd also practice with records that didn't have drummers on them. I'd turn it up sky high, close my eyes, and make believe I was playing with Paul Chambers. I'd play with Johnny Griffin's *Tough Tenors* with Ben Riley on drums. The stereo separation was such then that you could totally turn down the drum channel and still have the band to play with.

In the summer I would practice from noon till night. I also studied with Dennis Kinney in Staten Island. I didn't know the names of the rudiments, but from listening to Philly Joe Jones, Max Roach, Kenny Clarke, and Jimmy Cobb, I knew the *sound.* Dennis Kinney helped me to organize the rudiments.

"If a cat's 15 years old now, the first jazz drummer he's going to hear will either be Elvin, Jack, or Tony. They're masters of their craft, but they're also three of the most misunderstood drummers."

KM: Your time was better-spent playing with records than transcribing drum solos?

KW: To this day I've never transcribed any drum solos. Transcription is good, though; it helps you to understand note values. People send me Philly Joe or Max solos to proofread sometimes, and often they're incorrect. It always seems that these students have the ability to write down the notes quickly, but they lack the understanding. If you listen to the records over and over again, you'll get more than the notes; you'll get the sound and the feeling and the understanding of the way it should be. This music is technically demanding, but you have to go for feel and sound.

KM: It's important to be able to grasp certain subtleties.

KW: That's *the* most important thing in this music. I don't think teachers stress enough the importance of listening to records. Teachers can teach you to read, but they can't teach you to *hear.* And you're going to play what you hear. That goes for any instrument. Besides practicing, you have to listen to the older guys to really know what it's like to have and utilize good chops. You have to listen to drummers who can really comp with their left hand, or play accents, or do independent stickings to know how to use it. Listen to guys like Max or Philly Joe or Art Taylor. You can't listen to records from only a drummer's standpoint, either. Listen in terms of how to accompany other players.

KM: You've worked with Betty Carter, who's sort of an instrumentalist/vocalist in the way she uses her voice. Tell me about working with her.

KW: Betty is the kind of person who, if you're taking care of business, she won't bother you.

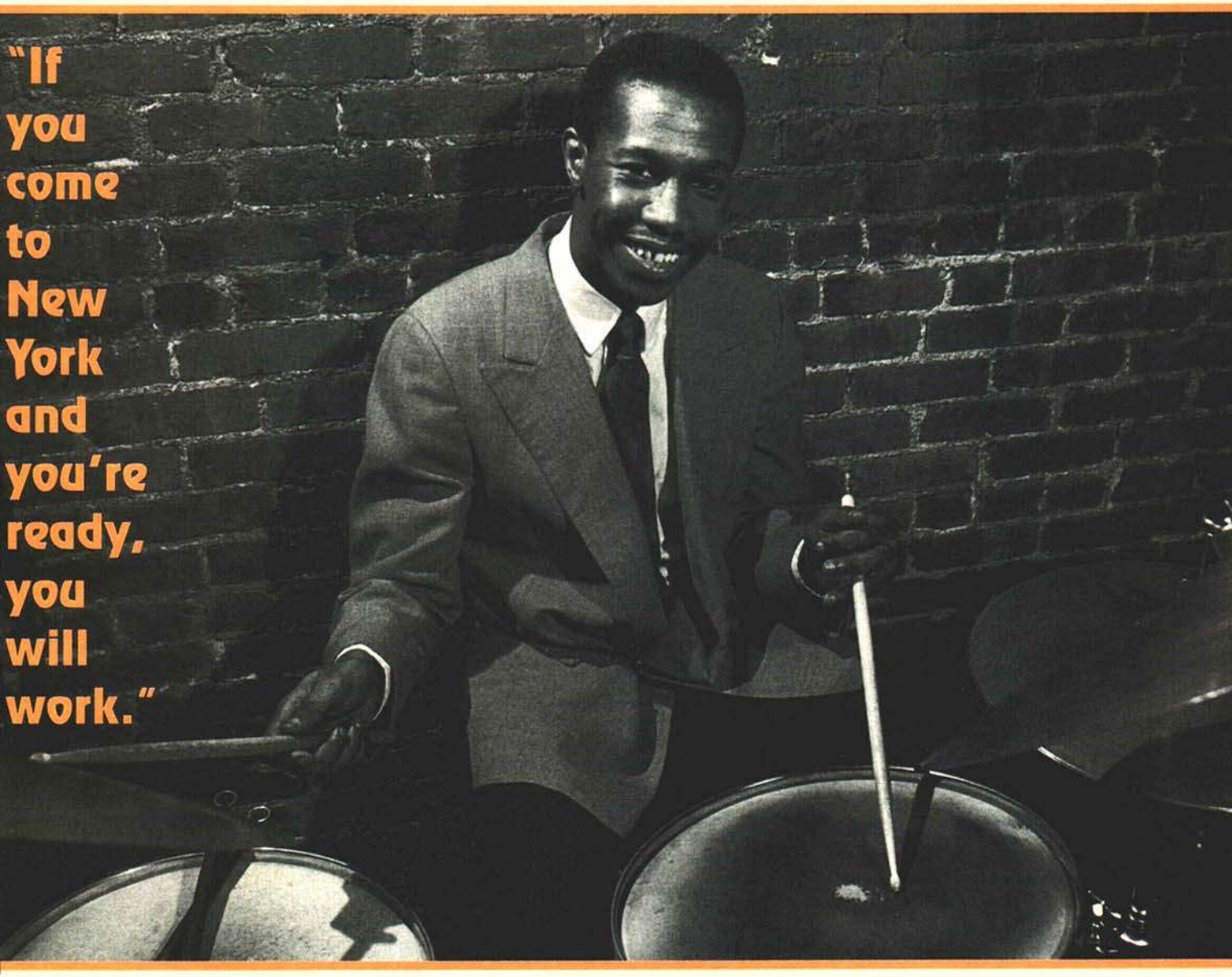
KM: Is your approach with a vocalist the same as when backing an instrumentalist?

KW: It's a whole different thing. You

The Best Of Washington

Here are the recordings Kenny Washington has played on that he says include his best work.

Album Title	Artist	Label/Catalog #
Images	Ralph Moore	Landmark 1520
The Audience	BettyCarter	Polygram 835684-2
'Bout Time	Mike Le Donne	Criss Cross 1033 CD
The Feeling Of Jazz	Mike Le Donne	Criss Cross 1041 CD
Self-Portrait In Swing	Joshua Breakstone	Landmark 14050
Jazz Poet	Tommy Flanagan	Timeless 301



don't play quite as loud. But I look at everyone as being different. With Betty I learned a lot about playing colors, about different shadings, and I learned a lot about control.

Betty would play something like "My Favorite Things" at a breakneck tempo. The tune would go on for about five minutes, then she'd call a ballad. I'd put the sticks down to go for the brushes and my hands would still be shaking! The ballad would be so slow, you could go to the bathroom between the beats.

Another thing that makes her thing so hard is that she doesn't like drummers to play brushes on the snare drum—no sweeps. She wants to hear the cymbal on 1 and 3 and the hi-hat on 2 and 4. She wanted that wide open space. It's hard to do that and make it really groove. Not only that, she wouldn't count off the tempos! Her arm would just come down. That was the downbeat. You had to feel the space between the first and second beats by the way she would sing the opening phrase.

KM: When you're playing brushes, are you counting in 8ths or 16ths?

KW: It goes a lot deeper than that with me. Growing up, listening to drummers play ballads, working with the bass player—that's how I learned to do it. I learned how it's supposed *to feel.* With me, it's a feeling.

I learned a lot listening to Mel Lewis, who was a big influence on me. He was a master at playing those slow to medium tempos, not only with brushes, but with sticks. There was one record—*Thad Jones And Mel Lewis Featuring Joe Williams*—that had this tune "The Night Time Is The Right Time," and all you could hear was Mel playing this slow ride cymbal beat. I listened to that over and over again.

Other influential artists that guys should check out are Ben Webster records, or Duke Ellington records with Sam Woodyard. If you listen to that stuff enough—we're talking about the primo stuff here—you'll learn how those tempos should feel. The more you play helps too, obviously.

Some people say I can be mean, and I guess they're right, but the reason comes from the fact that when I grew up, I heard the best. When I heard *those* cats it set my standards. I knew I'd better get it together if I wanted to match that kind of quality. I'd listen to Miles Davis' *Walkin'* record with Percy Heath and Kenny Clarke; just the way those two cats would play together was a

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Bob Gatzen

Photo by Lissa Wales

...Musical Renaissance Man

Designing drums for Noble & Cooley, drumheads for Evans, sticks for Calato, and drumbags for Tough Traveler would keep any man busy. Yet Bob Gatzen *also* finds the time to run a drum shop, run 60 miles a week, *and* act as drummer/ producer for his band, Red Eyes.

By Michael Bettine

His name might not be familiar to most drummers, but many of his innovations are. Bob Gatzen's ideas, most notably the Noble & Cooley drums and Evans *Genera* drumheads, have created a stir in the drum industry. But he is far from being a reclusive inventor. Bob remains an active drummer for jingles and various recording projects, and has owned a music store for the past 20 years. In talking with him, it's clear that he enjoys his many roles and sees them all as part of a larger creative process. With a background as a consumer, retailer, manufacturer, and recording artist, Gatzen offers a unique perspective on the drum industry.

A self-described workaholic, Bob exhibits a genuine enthusiasm for drums and the people he is involved with. "My real function is as a design innovator and R&D-type specialist," he says. "The reason these companies hire me is not just to design their products, but also to work on marketing and bringing a product to the consumer. This comes from always being involved in music. I play drums every day and have a retail store, so I have my finger on all these different pulses, and I've developed a certain vision for this stuff. In the past few years I've had this very strong creative curve. Things have been coming to me, and I'm beginning to get a feel for it. It's like I'm learning how to create the creative space."

Bob certainly seems to be on a roll lately. His wife, Joanne, who is very supportive, now manages the store, so Bob's distractions are lessened. But even in working 20-hour days, there's a need to find the time to be creative. "I'm a running junkie; I run about 60 miles a week. It's to the point where running and walking our dogs is when ideas come to me now. I've really gotten into this exercise thing because it's the space for me. The other part of my life has gotten so busy that I'm always being tugged on. It helps that I'm good at self-discipline and work best under commitment."

Even with commitment and serious intent, there needs to be a background of experience from which to draw on. "I was always a serious musician," Bob emphasizes. "I studied vibes with Gary Burton for five years and went to Hartt College. I played vibes for ten years and went back to drums about six years ago. I've been involved in electronic drums since the Simmons *SDSV* came out. I used to work for Simmons and Dynacord, doing sampling, and that has helped me develop acoustic instruments. I work a lot with the Macintosh and use *Soundtools,* a sound modeling program, working with spectral style analysis. It's become more scientific than when I first started designing. Before it was intuitive. I still rely on intuition and instinct more than anything, but now I tear things apart a bit more.

"I don't just test products by hitting them and listening, I *model* the sounds. I fabricate sounds and use them as models for acoustic sounds. I also do a lot of recording and work on the production end. When I find a snare sound that seems to be working, I put it on the screen and tear it apart. I find what I like about it, test it with various mic's, and see how it affects the processing

gear. It's now to the point where I can focus on the details. In the newest stuff, I'm looking at a lot of detail. These many elements, put together, create a good-sounding drum."

Bob's first design project was a snare drum for the Noble & Cooley Drum Company. While being the oldest and largest manufacturer of toy drums in America, they had not yet ventured into the professional market. "I got involved in this project seven years ago," he explains. "I was making custom drums at my shop, using Keller shells and Gretsch lugs, when a customer told me that Noble & Cooley steam-bent drumshells. So I went up there with the idea of building a premium drum, and I struck up a very strong relationship with Jay Jones, the owner of the company. We decided to fill a niche in the industry and design a drum based on this premise: Sound is going to be the main criteria. Sound, and then beauty. Every component on this drum has to do with making the drum sound right.

"The first one we made was a solid-shell with Gretsch lugs, like our custom drums. We used the old Slingerland *Radio King* as our model. It's an ideal drum if you can find one that's true and round. Back then, drums were just crude. They didn't know how to put the bearing edges on right, and the snare beds were terrible. That's why you can always improve an original *Radio King,* just by changing the snare beds and bearing edges. I do a lot of them in the store, increasing their dynamic range and sensitivity with these changes. But the primary fault was that they didn't really cure the wood on the shells; they made them out of green wood. Using green wood is fine, but the shell should go through a curing process to stabilize it. So the drums were out of round within a matter of months. You were lucky if you found a round one.

"After a couple of years of R&D, we went to our first NAMM show. The immediate reaction for the drum was very strong. It had flanged hoops and our own strainer. Then we showed it with cast hoops from Gretsch; we didn't have the money to make our own. It's expensive to put together the dies—$30,000 to $50,000.

"Before I went to college, I studied with Joe Porcaro. So I called him up in California and said, 'I've got this drum I've been working on. If I send you one, will you take a look at it and tell me what you think?' He was a primary force in launching this project because he took it around to all the recording guys, like Steve Schaeffer and Ralph Humphrey. That helped promote it, because it got to be known as 'the recording drum.' It had great sound, control, and dynamic range, so it recorded well."

"You can't always leave it up to drummers, because they're not drum techs. Even at the highest level, many very good drummers do not know how to tune."

Since then, the company has released a wide variety of snare drums, in addition to two types of drumsets—all featuring the solid-shell design. The acceptance of the snare drums is seen in a wide range of musical styles, with drummers as diverse as Phil Collins, Vinnie Colaiuta, and jazz great Ed Blackwell using them. A tribute to these innovations has come from the major drum companies, who have incorporated similar shell and hardware designs in their newer drum lines.

But the past year has seen a dramatic change for Noble & Cooley with the addition of the *Horizon* series drumsets and HP snare drums. These drums feature a ply construction. "The *Horizon* series is a solid wood concept," relates Bob. "There are no pre-fab, two-ply woods used. All the plies are laid at the same time, in the same direction. The pitch and resonance end up very much like those of a solid drum. They're very musical, and they sing. Within certain boundaries, the sound was inspired by Gretsch, but looking to be more precise and clear. The design has more strength in the shell and a clearer sound. The bass drum is great for recording, with a denser, more focused sound than the *Star* series."

In a radical departure from accepted construction methods, the inner ply is made from a soft wood—mahogany—instead of keeping the shell all maple. "The horizontal ply maple shells have a higher pitch," Bob explains, "with extreme snap and attack—too much, in fact. So we tried different types of woods for the inner ply, and mahogany created the right sound. A lot of '50s and '60s drums had mahogany inside and sounded good."

Another project Bob became involved in was the Zildjian snare drum. "About four years ago," he says, "Lennie DiMuzio of Zildjian came to me and said they were interested in a snare made out of their alloy. I agreed to work on it—only if I had full rein on the project, and if it was going to be for players, not just collectors. We decided on a cast shell, but we didn't want it to be non-vibrating. We sand-cast the first one, had it machined down to W thickness, and used the Noble & Cooley hardware for optimum resonance. Zildjian

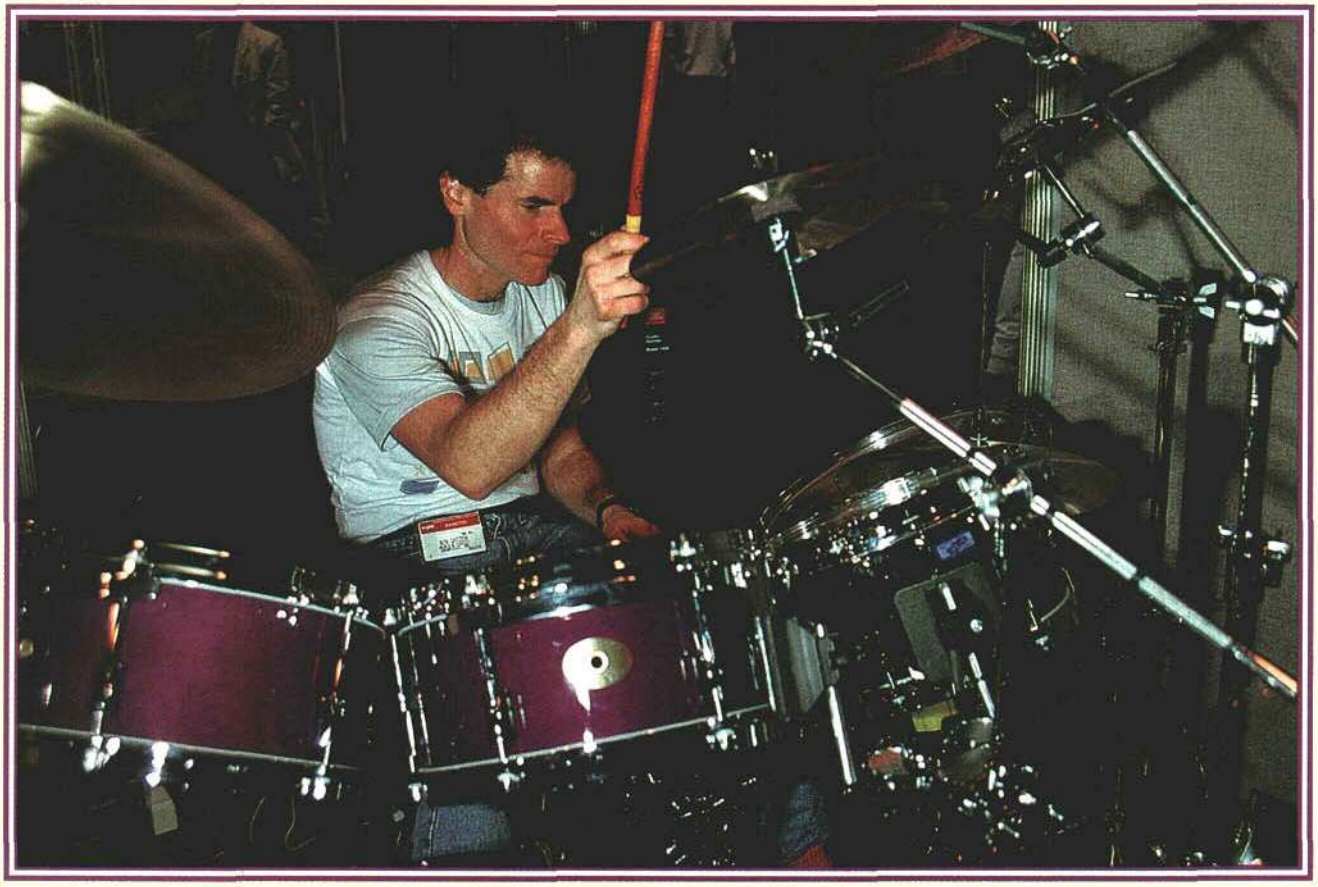

Photo by Lissa Wales

thought it sounded great and decided to go ahead with the project. So two years ago we introduced the 7" model, and a year ago we came out with a 4 1/2" model. The 4 1/2" drum is unique. The sound changes as you play it—it sounds 'woody' when played soft, metallic when played hard. We tried to keep the cost down to make it more accessible, but the machining is expensive. The shells are still sand-cast at Zildjian, but all the machining is done at an outside shop, and then we assemble them. There's just no way to get around the cost of the labor."

Bob sees the Zildjian/Noble & Cooley effort as an important step in the industry. Cooperation between companies has been rare in the past. "We used the strength of both companies to put out this drum," he says. "Zildjian is known for their alloy, while Noble & Cooley has a good reputation as a drum company. It's the start of something important. The companies can also share the cost of development and promotion, which is of great benefit to them, and ultimately the consumer. I'm currently working on some other joint projects, and we'll see more of this within the industry in the future."

Bob has also been instrumental in developing the recent *Genera* series of heads from Evans. "I don't call myself an engineer," he says, "but I've studied musical acoustics and learned enough to apply it. About two years ago, Peter Erskine, who's a friend of mine, went to Evans president Bob Beals and said, 'You should have this guy Gatzen look at your heads and see what he thinks about them.' So Bob sent them to me. The first thing I said was, 'These heads can be improved. Let's start by finding some new plastic films.'

"Films in the industry are the key issue. Because the head industry is such a small market share, compared to people who buy polyester films from these companies, we can't get a custom-made film for musical applications. We need to look at all the ones out there and try to apply them. You may get films that are used in electric motors as conductors, as insulators in fabricating steel together, or as wrappers for chewing gum. We got as many as we could and started to pick some out for a snare head.

"You need a calling card, a product on the market where the consumer goes into a store and says, 'What about this new *Genera* head?' Then the store asks its distributor for them, and they call up Bob Beals, saying they need the new heads. That's the premise of what we're doing. I felt snare and bass heads were the calling cards. These are the main drums on the set, what drummers buy the most of. If the snare and bass are happening, then you're in business.

"So we started with snare heads. I've never liked using an external muffle ring, because it affects the attack characteristics of the drum. I noticed that using muffling is almost a psychological thing with drummers and really feeds back to them. It's not that important, because the decay of the drum is totally obliterated once it's in the music. What *is* important, and what the listener perceives, is about the first 50 to 100 milliseconds of sound. The attack charac-

continued on page 94

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TAMA

Sonor Force 3000 Kit

by Rick Van Horn

Sonor's new "mid-price" kit follows in the footsteps of the "entry-level" Force 2000...but takes some major strides of its own.

A little over a year ago, Sonor entered the "entry-level" market with their five-piece *Force 2000* kit. Of course, everything is relative, and "entry level" for Sonor is not the same price point as it is for most other companies. Even so, that kit was priced substantially lower than Sonor's next series *(Sonorlite),* leaving what is called, in marketing terms, a "pricing gap." Enter the *Force 3000,* which Sonor has introduced to fill that gap.

Description

Our test kit featured a 16x22 bass drum, 10x12 and 11x13 rack toms, a 16x16 floor tom, and a 6 1/2xl4 wood snare drum. (It's worthy of note that the *Force 3000* isn't a pre-packaged series; you can buy either cataloged kits or separate components from a reasonable selection of sizes.) It was finished in an attractive black lacquer—one of four available lacquer finishes. The overall look of the kit is consistent with that initiated with the *Force 2000:* a clean, cylindrical style of hardware, lugs, and appointments. It's neither stripped-down nor overly fancy; it just looks attractive and functional.

However, while the *Force 3000* kit resembles its lower-priced cousin, the composition of the shells is completely different: Where *Force 2000* shells are of poplar, *Force 3000* shells are made of birch. The snare and toms are 9-ply, measuring 7.5mm thick; the bass drum is 11-ply, measuring 8.5mm thick. This is the same wood that is used in Sonor's *Sonorlite* series, along with the pro-line drums of several other major brands.

Drum Sounds

The birch shells created a bright yet powerful sound from the toms and the bass drum. These drums came fitted with Sonor's *EP Medium* bottom heads and *XP Thin* clear batter heads. Even though the latter are two-ply heads, they gave the drums an attack reminiscent of that produced by single-ply heads. I don't count this as a negative feature, because many people like this sound—and the two-ply heads would probably prove more durable. For those who prefer a deeper, rounder sound from the toms and bass drum, Sonor offers an *XP Heavy* head as an alternative batter choice.

In addition to the *XP Thin* batter, the bass drum was fitted with a black *EP Medium* logo head with a 7" hole in it. The only muffling I used was a felt strip on the batter head that came supplied with the drum, yet the drum sounded very controlled. It had full body and plenty of projection, but wasn't overly boomy. Not everyone likes as "live" a sound as I do from a bass drum, but it's always easier to muffle an overly live drum than it is to try to coax life from a dead-sounding one. This bass drum gave me lots of "headroom" to work with in that regard. Purely in terms of pitch, I couldn't get the drum to go as *low* as I would have liked—even when I had the head as loose as was practical. I figured that this might be due to the thin batter head, so I tried the drum with a Remo *Pinstripe,* and then with an Evans *Rock Heavy Duty* head. In both cases, the heavier heads produced a deeper pitch and more defined "thud." This told me that the drum was capable of producing a wide pitch range, depending on what heads the drummer might prefer to use.

The snare drum was fitted with an *EP White Coated* head. The combination of this head and the birch shell created an interesting situation: With the addition of a 1" drumhead ring on top of the head, the drum sounded crisp, dry, and woody. When the drumhead ring was removed, the drum rang like a metal-shelled snare, and delivered amazing cutting power—almost an "Alex Van Halen" sound. I was impressed with the versatility offered by this range of characteristics. Snare response was excellent—considering the depth of the drum—and the strainer mechanism operated easily and with a minimum of noise.

For those who mike their drums: I tried this kit with MD's miking system on a live gig with my band. Wow! The penetrating attack sound from the toms that I mentioned earlier served to drive the drums out of the amps. I rolled on a bit of bottom for the toms—and even more for the bass drum—to suit my own taste, but I had absolutely no problem achieving the sound I wanted. These drums would probably work well in a studio situation too, as long as lively drums were the goal. I would never describe their sound as "mellow."

Hardware

The drums on the *Force 3000* kit are fitted with the same tubular lugs as are on the *Force 2000.* In fact, all the hardware is essentially the same: solid, straight-ahead stands with excellent construction quality and some nice touches. These include bass drum spurs with extension gauges and angle indicators for memorizing setups, a seven-step molded-plastic bottom cymbal tilter on the hi-hat, and an excellent bass drum pedal that is simple, quick, and responsive.

Some touches that have been *added* to the *Force 3000*'s hardware include memory collars on all the stands, convertible rubber-to-spike-tipped feet on the hi-hat, a quick-release snare basket on the snare stand, and double bracing on all

the legs. This last feature is the only design element of this kit with which I take issue. I don't really see the need to increase both the weight and the price of these stands with this extra bracing. It certainly isn't necessary from a functional point of view; the original single-braced *Force 2000* stands are more than heavy and stable enough. I'm sure it was done in an effort to make the stands look more massive and heavy-duty as some sort of sales appeal. But the double-bracing is spaced quite close, making the stands look so clean and streamlined that I don't really believe this end is achieved, either. It seems to me a case of either doing too much or not enough. I would have retained the single-braced legs and saved the heavy-duty stuff for the "pro" lines.

Conclusion

This review presents me with a problem I've never faced before: How does one evaluate a kit that is designated "mid-price" but costs $2,995? Well, it helps to realize that talking about a "mid-price" Sonor kit is like talking about a "mid-price" BMW. So, within that context, it all boils down to: Is this kit worth the money? Given the excellent acoustic performance—especially the versatility of the snare drum—and given the quality of construction that Sonor is famous for—from the bearing edges of the drums to the threads on the wingnuts—then the *Force 3000* is worth the money. I still think that Sonor might have held the price down a bit by sticking to single-braced stands, but otherwise it's an excellent kit that compares favorably with many pro-line kits in the same price range.

MD's Sound System

For the purpose of product reviews involving drum and/or cymbal miking, *MD* employs the following equipment:
Shure SM98, SM91, and SM57 microphones
Zildjian ZMC-10 Cymbal Microphone System
Seck 122 12-channel stereo mixer
Shure M268 mixers (2)
JBL/UREI 6260 power amplifier
JBL 4602B Cabaret Series monitor speakers (2)

Zildjian Pre-Aged K Rides

by Rick Mattingly

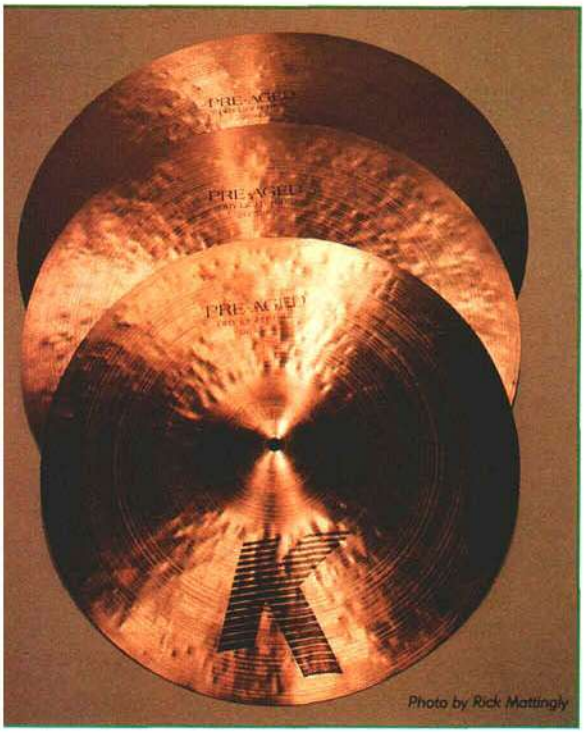
Ever hear the expression "Everything old is new again"? Zildjian's new cymbals take the opposite approach.

The latest in Zildjian's ever-expanding cymbal selection is a new sub-category of the K line: the Pre-Aged series. It debuted at the winter NAMM show with three ride cymbals: an 18", a 20", and a 22". They all carry the designation *Dry Light.*

Zildjian obviously knew that labeling a cymbal "Pre-Aged" was going to provoke questions, so they had their answer ready. According to the official press release, it's simply a matter of "a manufacturing technique that allows [Zildjian] to produce a new cymbal with the tonality and sound characteristics of an older, more 'played-in' one."

The implication is obvious. Once again, someone is trying to recapture the sound of the legendary "old Ks" made in Istanbul that were favored by a lot of jazz drummers in the '50s and '60s. But such a venture is virtually doomed from the start by the fact that no one can really agree on what an old K actually sounds like. The manufacturing process was so crude that the cymbals came out very inconsistent, and in a stack of, say, 20" medium rides, one could find everything from thin trashy cymbals to thick pingy ones. Mel Lewis, who championed the old K sound as much (or possibly more) than anyone, admitted that he could sometimes go through over 100 old Ks without finding one that he liked.

There are, nevertheless, a few characteristics that most people would agree



apply to the old K rides that the aforementioned jazz drummers preferred: They tended to be on the thin side, had at least a few "trashy" overtones, and produced a somewhat dry "click" sound—as opposed to a more metallic "ping." (If anyone reading this is in possession of one or more authentic old Ks that are fairly heavy, have absolutely no trashy overtones, and produce a wonderfully clear ping sound, please don't write me a letter. I'm quite aware that old Ks of that description exist.)

So, will the Pre-Aged Ks appeal to fans of a certain type of old Ks? Again, it will depend on what your idea of an old K actually is. None of the Pre-Aged Ks I received for review sounded exactly like any of the old Ks in my particular collection. But certain characteristics were definitely similar.

I'll start with the 20", since that's the most typical size for a ride cymbal. The Pre-Aged K had a pretty nice blend of stick definition and overtones. It was drier than the regular K *Light Ride,* but not as clangy as the K *Dry Ride.* I found it to be very close to a K *Light Ride* with a *Brilliant* finish, but not quite as muted. It also has a bigger bell than the *Light Ride,* with a clearer, more penetrating tone. I wouldn't call this a particularly trashy-sounding cymbal, but it wasn't pingy either. Essentially, its sound fell somewhere between the K *Dry* and *Light* models (which makes sense, given its *Dry Light* designation). The list price is $290.

The 18" was comparable in a lot of ways. It also had a good blend of overtones and definition, but had more of the "trashy" sound than the other two. Of the three, this one probably sounded most like the old Ks associated with many jazz drummers. It has a large, clear bell, however, which many old Ks didn't. This one lists for $256.

The 22" was my favorite—which is noteworthy, since I've never cared for 22" cymbals. Most of those I've played (and heard) tended to be overpowering, dissolving in a wash of overtones. Or else they were just heavy and clanky. But this 22" seemed more controllable. It still had a big sound with a good amount of shimmery overtones and a hint of the trashy sound, but I could always hear that dry "click" coming from the stick impact. The bell was not as clear on this one, producing quite a few overtones of its own, similar to a lot of the old Ks. This cymbal could be overpowering in an acoustic trio, but in a larger setting—where a big sound with good definition is called for—this would be an excellent choice. The 22" lists for $343.

All three of the cymbals had relatively low pitches (which was often the case with jazz drummers' old Ks). That's probably the main thing that prevents the 18" model from being an optimum crash cymbal. It responded pretty fast and was explosive, but most drummers want a crash cymbal to speak out over the top of the other instruments. This one could get lost in the mid range.

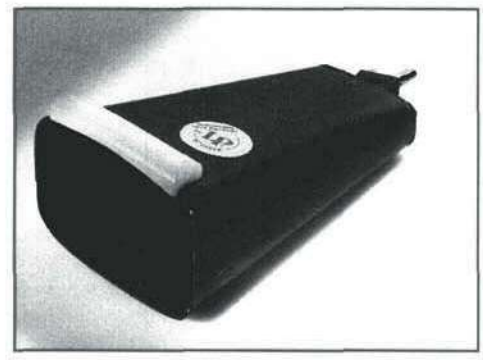
But the low pitches of the Pre-Aged Ks are what would make them work fine as rides—assuming you want a ride that speaks from within the band's sound (a la Mel Lewis or Elvin Jones) as opposed to a ride that projects out over the band (a la Buddy Rich or Louie Bellson).

While the 20" model is a fine cymbal, I didn't find it to be radically different from some of the other Zildjian K models—although it did fill a gap between a couple of them. I would rate the 22" and 18" models as being the more important additions to the Zildjian catalog. They each have characteristics that make them unique, and will probably appeal to fans of a certain variety of old K sound.

LP Ridge Rider Cowbell

■ by Rick Van Horn

LP's new *Ridge Rider* rock cowbell is designed for extremely loud playing and hard hitting. It's made of heavy-gauge steel, and is fitted with a molded plastic striking surface (the "ridge"—get it?) on the top of the bell's mouth. This ridge serves several purposes: It mutes the attack sound of the stick striking the bell ("without the need for unsightly bell taping," according to LP's promo literature), keeps the mouth of the bell from being dented or misshapen, and reduces stick breakage. All in all, that's a pretty nifty feature. (The ridge is bright red in color, so it adds a bit of pizzazz to the look of the bell, as well.)



The *Ridge Rider* is a *big* cowbell. It weighs 2 lbs. 5 oz., and measures 8 1/2" from the clamp to the mouth of the bell, which is 5 1/2" wide by 3 1/4" high. What does that all mean? It means you can

forget mounting this bell in the traditional position on a bass drum hoop: You'd rip the hoop apart when you added the increased force of your stick impact to the weight of the bell. In fact, the design of the bell itself precludes such mounting. The heavy-duty clamp (which uses an oversized wing nut that can be securely tightened by hand) is made to accommodate a 3/8" rod, such as an L-post from a tom mount, or some thicker cymbal tilter rods. (If you'd like to bust your lead singer's chops, tell him this is a new *hand-held* bell. Then sit back and laugh while his arm droops lower and lower.)

The sound produced by the *Ridge Rider* is deep, full, and penetrating. And boy, does it *project!* If you need to cut through some heavy amplification, or just feel the need to make a percussive statement that *nobody* will miss, this is the bell for you. It lists for $39.95.

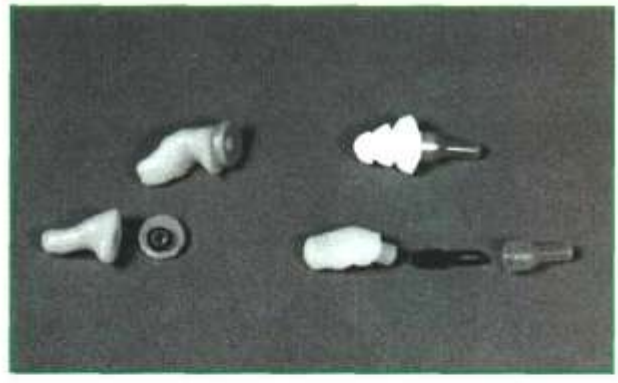
Westone Hearing Protection Devices

by Rick Van Horn

There is no cure for hearing loss, so "an ounce of prevention" becomes all the more valuable. Westone provides that "ounce"—in three models!

Back in October of 1990, *MD* presented a feature by Peter Cohen entitled "Drumming: How Risky Is It To Your Hearing?" It's gratifying to report that drummers sat up and took notice of this article: *MD* was besieged with letters seeking more information on hearing centers, testing procedures, and—most of all—hearing protection devices (HPDs). That prompted us to look into these devices a bit further.

Among the list of HPDs presented in Peter's article, the one that most interested me was the *ER-15* from Westone Laboratories: a custom-fitted earplug equipped with an attenuating filter from Etymotic Research. This device was created primarily for musicians, to lower sound pressure levels entering the ear while maintaining an even frequency response. (The main criticism of earplugs from musicians has been that they don't attenuate all frequencies evenly, resulting in a distorted perception of the sound.) I got in touch with Bonnie Foster at Westone for more information, and learned that the company also offers the *ER-20 Custom* model, and an *ER-20* filter fitted into a generic plastic earplug. On her recommendation, I decided to try each of them, since they represent quite a difference in price.



(top left) ER-15 with filter installed; (bottom left) ER-15 plug and filter separated; (top right) ER-20 with filter installed; (bottom right) ER-20 Custom separated to show plug, filter and cover

ER-15

ER-15 plugs consist of flat, disk-shaped filters that attach to molded ear inserts. The molds are made from actual impressions of the wearer's ear canals—which must be taken by a professional audiologist trained in this procedure. (Elizabeth Lanza, of the Speech & Hearing Department at St. Lukes/Roosevelt Hospital Center in New York, performed this procedure for me.)

Aside from offering the best fit from a sound-barrier standpoint, molded ear inserts offer the advantages of comfort and ease of use. Since they conform to the shape of the ear canal, there is very little sensation of pressure from them—as you normally get from plastic plugs that must "press into" the ears in order to stay secure. (I was able to wear them quite comfortably for seven hours straight at the New York Zildjian Day, for example.) Putting the plugs in properly was easy: They'll only fit one way. They were a bit tricky to remove, however, owing to the fact that the *ER-15* disks didn't offer much to get hold of and the molds themselves were well down inside my ear. But a little practice overcame this difficulty.

From an acoustic standpoint, the *ER-15s* were a pleasure to use. They reduced sound levels significantly, while keeping my overall *perception* of the sound very close to normal. I was able to discern speech clearly, and cymbals sounded very natural—albeit reduced in volume. As with any form of earplugs, I had to compensate a bit in my technique for the reduced volume I was hearing, so as not to overplay. But even this problem was much less prevalent with the *ER-15s* than with other plugs that attenuate less evenly.

There always seems to be a trade-off between advantages and disadvantages in a product. In the case of *theER-15s,* it is that in order to keep the attenuation as

flat and even as they do, they cannot reduce total sound levels as much as some other filters can. (They're rated at 15dB reduction when sound pressure levels are at 95dB or less.) This posed no problem when I used the plugs with my club band, and certainly not at the Zildjian Day performance—which was highly amplified. However, I probably would not feel as secure if performing with a metal band in a small club, or in an arena situation. But for any volume level less than mega-decibel, the *ER-15s* certainly offer the most natural-sounding form of ear protection I've ever experienced. They're available at $130 per pair, and require a visit to an audiologist to obtain.

ER-20 Custom

ER-20 Custom earplugs feature the same type of molded ear inserts as the *ER-15s,* but employ more powerful ear-protection filters. They're designed to reduce sound levels by 20dB, and as such would be more effective in extra-high-volume situations. Frequency attenuation is not as even, however, so the sound I heard was not as "true" as with the *ER-lSs.* (Highs were reduced, while lows were enhanced.) But I was still more comfortable with these earplugs than others I've tried in the past, and could accept the sound quality from them far more. One positive feature of the *ER-20 Customs* is that the filter unit is a small rod rather than a flat disk, and it protrudes out of the ear, making the plugs easier to remove than the *ER-15s.* They list for $90, and also require an audiologist's services for the ear molds.

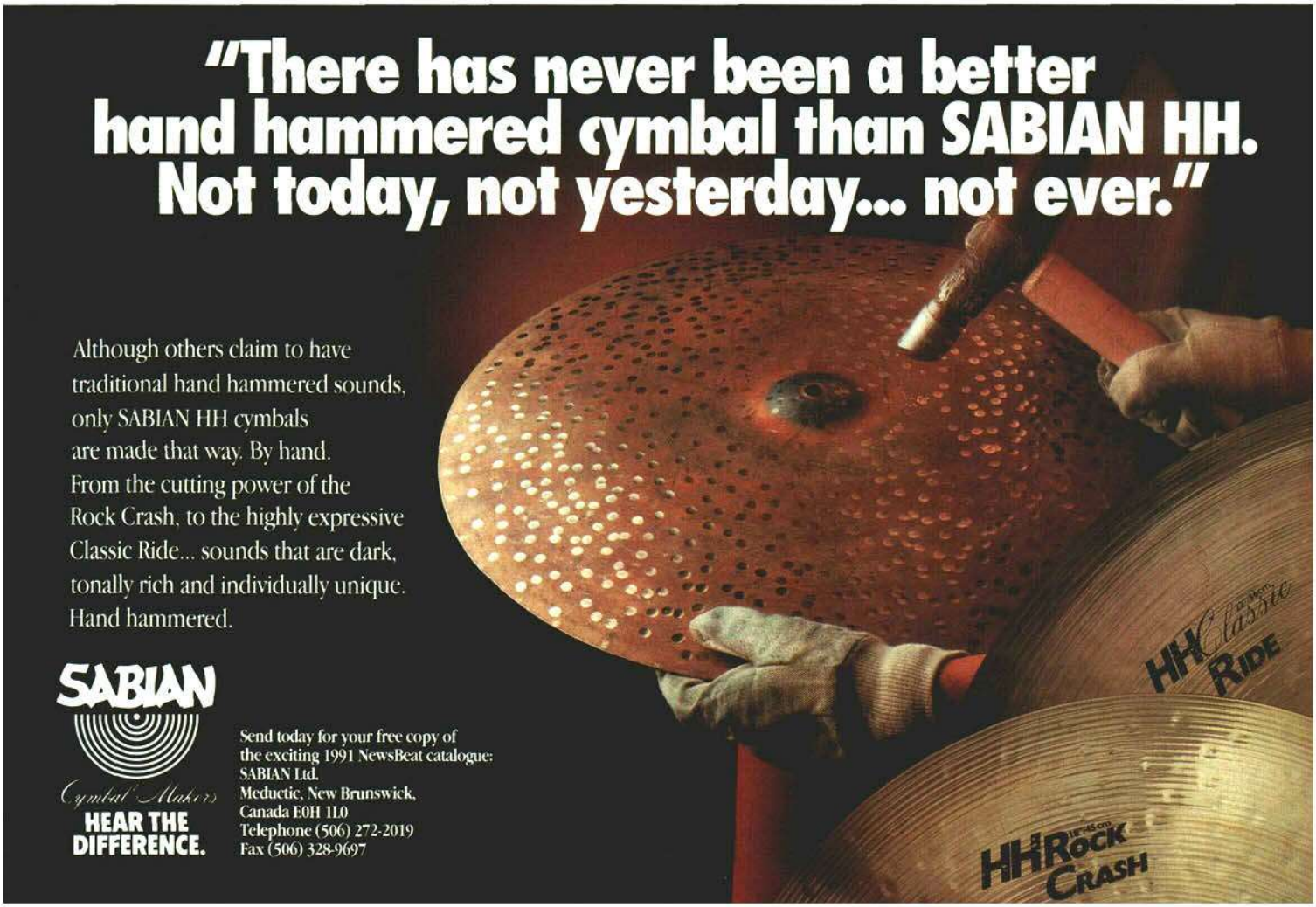
ER-20

ER-20 plugs are simply the *ER-20* filters fitted into generic, soft-plastic, shooter's-type earplugs. These were less comfortable to wear than the other models, since they were not custom-fitted to my ears. But they provided essentially the same sound-reduction performance as did the *ER-20 Customs.* Their main advantages are accessibility and low cost: They are readily available in a one-size-fits-most configuration at $30 per pair.

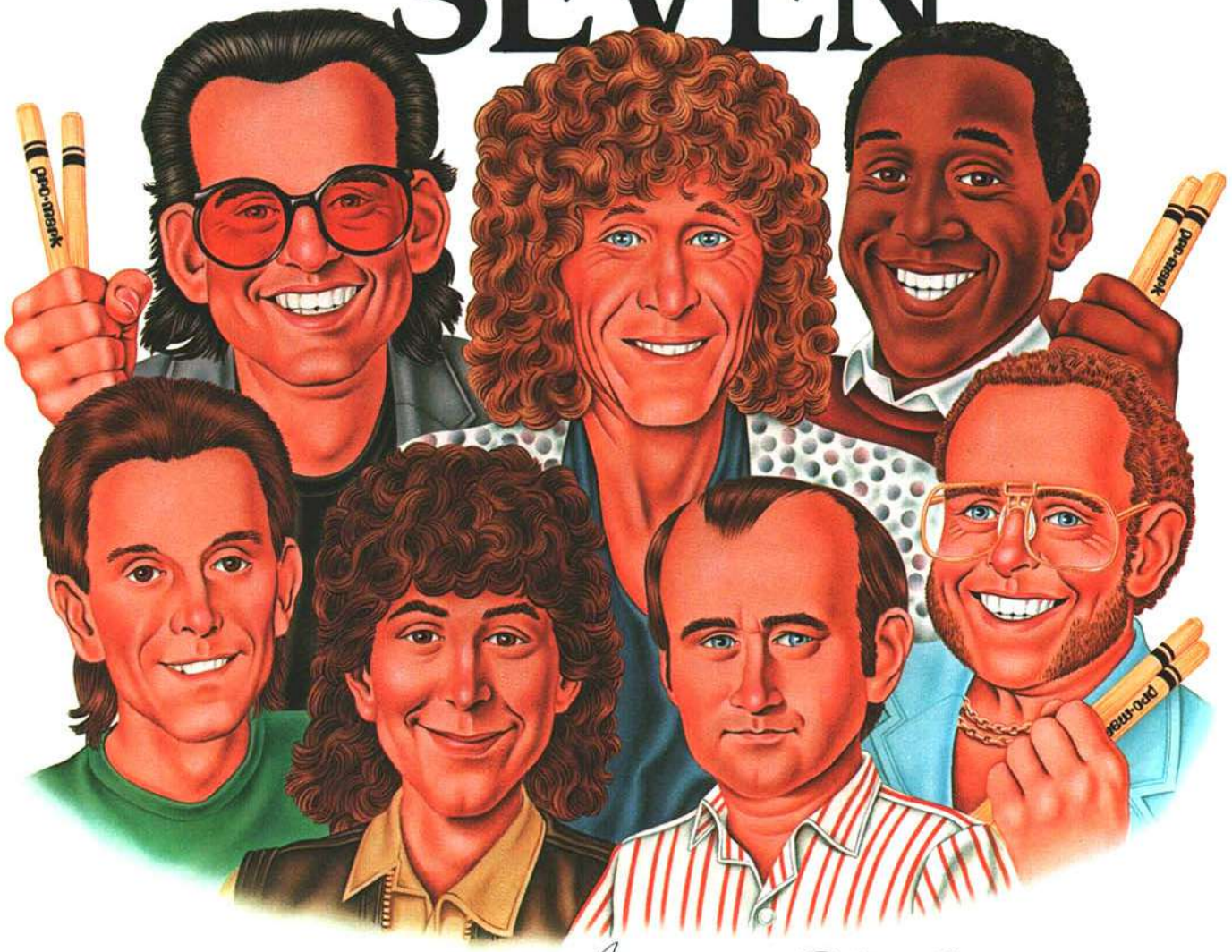
I do want to mention one aspect of wearing earplugs—of *any* design and of *any* brand—that was present with the Westone devices. I do a lot of singing, and wearing plugs affected me in two ways. On the positive side, I could hear myself better, since I could hear my voice "inside my head" through bone conduction. Also, with the ambient noise level reduced by the plugs, I could adjust my personal vocal monitor so that it was a bit louder than anything else I heard.

On the negative side, the plugs interfered with the equalization of air pressure that takes place whenever a person swallows. This also seemed to happen during certain sung phrases. It was somewhat annoying at first, but I got used to it—and I was more than willing to accept this minor inconvenience in exchange for the hearing protection I was gaining.

For information on how to obtain any of the devices reviewed here, contact Bonnie Foster at Westone Laboratories, P.O. Box 15100, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80935, or call (800) 525-5071.



THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN



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Snare Stand Protection

Here's another use for the clear vinyl tubing that many drummers are already cutting up for cymbal-stand sleeves: Most hardware stores carry this tubing in a variety of sizes. The 1/2" size is perfect for replacing worn-out rubber on the cradle-arms of most snare drum stands. The clear tubing is unobtrusive in appearance, which might be a consideration for vintage stands that didn't have rubber on them in the first place.

The use of this material eliminates any rattle from metal-to-metal contact, and protects snare drum rims from possible scratches and dents. Simply cut the tubing to the desired length and slide it over the cradle arm, using a lubricant if necessary.

John Olson
Los Angeles CA

Drum Machine Recordings

Owners of MIDI drum setups with drum machines can often use their equipment to completely record drum tracks for recordings. This requires a MIDI drum machine that can record patterns in real-time and that has a pattern length that can be set as long as the length of the song (such as an Alesis *HR-16).* The idea is to make the pattern length as long as the song, and set up the proper time signature, tempo, quantization, and voice parameters. Then set the drum machine up to be triggered by whatever triggering setup you use (pads or acoustic drum triggers), and play that setup for the entire length of the song. This will record your drum pattern in real-time. That pattern can then be edited to fix mistakes and/or to add more parts, and then can be recorded by the multi-track equipment at one time. Be advised that this does take a large amount of sequencer memory. But this method offers great flexibility, since you can edit your pattern and record it outside the studio. And it will improve your recordings by using high-quality sounds without sounding typically robotic, as tracks created strictly by machine can do.

Scott Spellman
Troy MI

Deep-Cold Stripping

Here's a tip I discovered by accident. I was having problems stripping the plastic off some drums I was re-covering. Nothing I used in the line of thinners or heat seemed to work. So I put the job away for a while, storing the drums in an unheated storage area. In Iowa, it can get quite cold (20° - 30° or less). When it came time to finish the job, I took the drums in from the cold and started to pull on the finish. It peeled off in sheets, without tearing the wood plies below as had happened before. In fact, the original glue was left intact! This made sanding and re-gluing no problem. Drummers in warmer climates might try their freezer or a cold-storage locker.

David Bosier
Cedar Rapids IA

Leg Extenders

I've been fighting with floor tom legs that are too short for years. I finally came across a sturdy, reliable, and space-saving alternative. Take a 1" x 1" x 12" piece of wood (longer or shorter, depending on your needs) and saw it into three equal pieces. Using a drill bit that is the same diameter as your floor tom legs (generally about W), drill a hole about 2" deep in one end of each piece of wood. Remove the rubber feet from your floor tom legs, replace them with the pieces of wood, and you're all set! A good coat of gloss-black paint will add a nice final touch. There's also no problem fitting the extended legs into a trap case.

Jeff Wald
Cambridge MA

Band Your Cowbell

For those who want a cowbell around the drumset, but don't want the incredibly loud roar that is inherent with a mounted bell, here's an idea. Since gaffer's tape leaves that "gunk" on the bell (and tends not to look so great), just pull a typical elasticized terrycloth wristband (or headband, depending on bell size) over the widest part of the cowbell. The volume will be decreased, the feel will not be sacrificed, and the bell will look neat.

Scott Armstrong
Port Hope, Ontario, Canada

Bass Drum Head Protection

If you carry your bass drum in a soft case, there is a danger of the front head breaking during transport because of the hole cut in it. The solution is to place a spare head over the hole. Most bass drum hardware will allow this, and it should lock into place nicely. (This would also keep a spare head available at all times.) If your regular-sized head won't fit in this manner, use a head one size down. Most drumshops will sell you a used head for a couple of dollars.

Mark Andes
Brooklyn NY

Note: The tips presented in Drumline *are suggestions based on the personal experience of individual drummers, and are not necessarily endorsed or recommended by* Modern Drummer *magazine.* Modern Drummer *cannot guarantee that any problem will be solved by any* Drumline *suggestion, and cannot be responsible for any damage to equipment or personal injury resulting from the utilization of any such suggestion. Readers are encouraged to consider each suggestion carefully before attempting to utilize any* Drumline *tip.*

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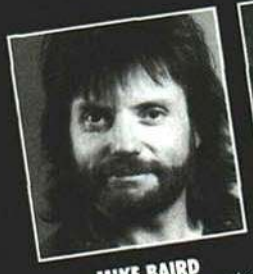

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Tom Batters: Coated Ambassador
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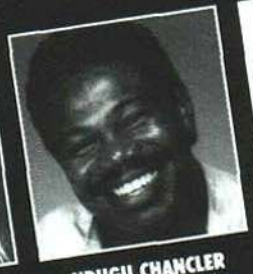

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Bass Drum: Ebony PinStripe
Tom Batters: FiberSkyn 2 Med.
Tom Bottoms: FiberSkyn 2 Med.

VINNIE COLAIUTA
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Tom Batters: Clear Ambassador
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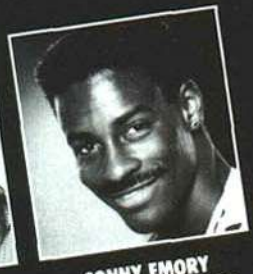

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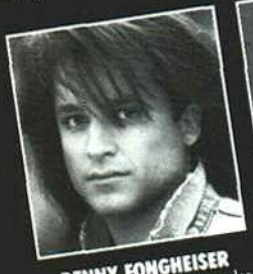

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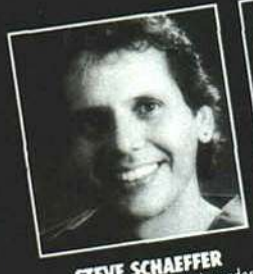

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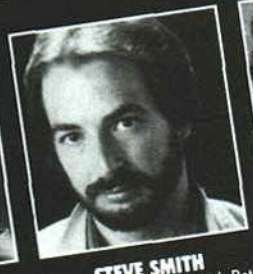

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Preventing Back Problems

by Garry Montgomery

Do serious damage to your back—and you can kiss your drumming career goodbye!

The importance of a strong back and proper posture in drumming is something we should all be aware of. And yet it continues to be an issue overlooked by both teachers and students alike. Unfortunately, the incidence of back problems among drummers is on the increase.

The drumset player, often seated for anywhere from one to four hours, needs to seriously consider not only posture, but how the set layout affects the mechanics of the body over the long term. Let's look at a few important points.

Positioning

First off, for correct balance and freedom of movement, it's essential that the throne height permit the upper leg to be parallel to the floor when the feet are positioned on the pedals. This means that the top of the seat will be about knee-high. Though there are many models of drum thrones (in an amazing range of prices), some of them are not worth much. Don't waste money on a cheap, uncomfortable seat. Go into hock if you must, but be sure to get a sturdy, stable, well-padded seat. If it wobbles when you move, or you sink to the wood, *get rid of it!*

After establishing your seat height, position the snare drum so that your sticks rest naturally on the center of the drum with your arms in a relaxed playing position. Pull your bass drum towards you so that when the ball of your foot rests on the center of the footplate, your ankle hangs directly *under* the knee. (See Photo 1.) When your heel is placed flat on the pedal with the toes well forward, your ankle should be slightly *forward* of the knee. (See Photo 2.)

Finally, position your tom-toms and cymbals so that they're *easy* to reach, allowing for a good, clear stroke without the need to "poke" at any one particular component. It's also very important that your ride cymbal (on which you spend a good deal of time) be positioned so that it's easy to play for extended periods without causing undue shoulder fatigue.

Lifting And Carrying

If you're a star, with a roadie who sets up and tears down your gear, you may not have a problem here. But for the majority of us, who have to lug that set up and down stairs and in and out of station wagons and car trunks, the resilience of your back could become a critical factor on the span of your playing career.

Regardless of how light the load may seem, it's always wisest to lift with your *legs* rather than your back. Keeping your back fairly straight, always bend at the knees when it's time to cart those heavy drums and cases. *Never bend at the back.* Carry heavy loads in the center of the body, and as close to the body as possible. Also, heavy trap cases should be switched from hand to hand as soon as the load becomes even slightly uncomfortable.

Eight For The Road

To ensure that your playing career is long and trouble-free as far as your back is concerned, prevention is much wiser than relying on attempts to cure the damage after it's been done. Make some of these simple, proven back exercises a part of your daily workout, and hopefully you'll still be playing comfortably well into old age.

Be sure to do each of these exercises *slowly.* And don't stretch farther than your body can reasonably go. Start off with five to ten repetitions of each at first, and increase gradually if you choose to. (These exercises aren't meant to turn you into the Hulk, but merely to strengthen and stretch notorious trouble spots.) As with any form of exercise, if you feel any pain or severe discomfort, stop immediately and consult a physician before you continue.

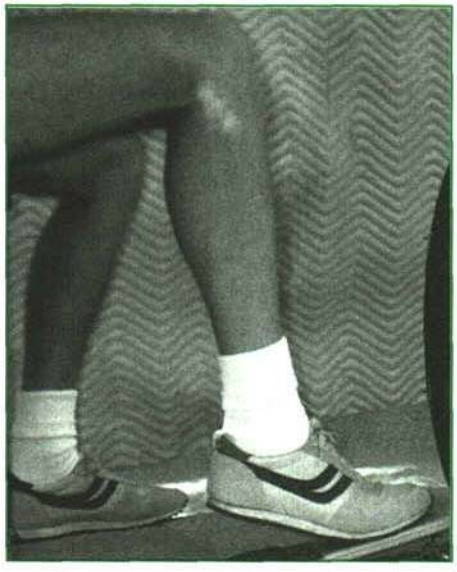

Photo 1

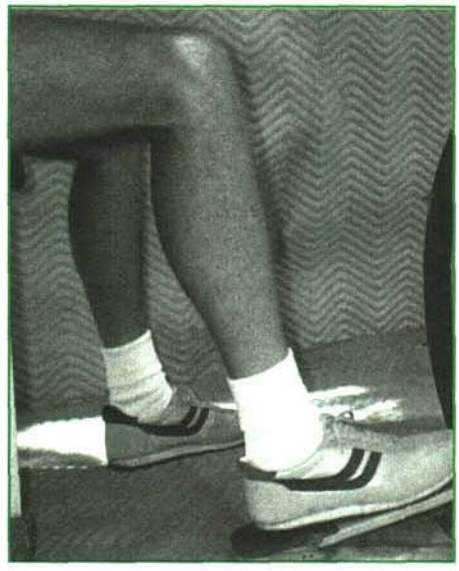

Photo 2

Stomach Crunch While lying on your back (and keeping knees bent), curl your chin up to your chest, and continue curling your upper body into a crunch position

Bicycle Raise With hands behind your head (while lying on your back), and with your feet off the floor, pedal bicycle-style.

Back Up Lie on your back and brace your upper body with your hands by your sides. Then twist your hips to the left and right alternately.

Back Up While on your stomach, use your arms to push the upper body up and back in a gradual arc. Then lower your upper body back down to the floor, raise your butt, and rock back onto your knees, keeping your hands outstretched in front of you.

Back Arch On hands and knees, arch your back up and then down, similar to the way a cat would stretch.

Reverse Leg Raise On your stomach, with your weight on your elbows, bend your knees upward and try to lift them off the floor.

Upper Body Twist While standing, extend your arms upward and stretch tall. Then twist your upper body to the right while lifting up on the toes. Relax and repeat to the left.

Hip Swivel In a standing position, with arms crossed against the front of your body, swivel your hips while trying not to move your feet or shoulders.

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Where Have All The Clubbers Gone?

by Rick Van Horn

When I first started playing professionally (about the time of the original British Invasion in 1963), the concept was to learn to play an instrument, join a band, and then start playing some gigs for money. If you were good enough, you could consider making a career out of playing music for the entertainment of others. That concept led to the proliferation of lounges, restaurants, and other locations in which live bands were the source of entertainment—namely: the club scene.

Over the years, the club scene has survived many threats to its existence. These came mainly from alternative sources of entertainment, including computer games, home videos, discos—even video discos. The club scene survived all of these for two reasons. First, no matter what other activities divert their interest momentarily, people always seem to return to the realization that they enjoy *live music.* Second, live musicians can adapt to whatever style is popular in order to keep people entertained. As a matter of fact, live musicians can play any number of styles during the same evening's performance, if they are talented and have the desire to do it. But the club scene may be under its greatest attack now, from sources that it helped to spawn: concerts and music television.

"What!?" you say. "Concerts and music television are jeopardizing live music in clubs? That's ridiculous! Watching MTV or VH1 and going to concerts are what get people excited about music in the first place!"

True—to a certain extent. But what concerts and music videos have *also* done is promote a new ethic in the minds of many aspiring musicians. These individuals are no longer satisfied with developing a successful club act in which they can earn a comfortable living. Instead, their goal seems to be to form a band, cop an image from *MTV,* put a 45-minute set of appropriately-cloned tunes together, "pay their dues" for six months or so in "the clubs" (if it *must* take that long), and then get signed to a record label. Then it's immediately on to an album, a video (Look Ma, now *I'm* on MTV!), an arena tour, and fame and fortune—or so the scenario goes.

"So," you ask, "what's wrong with that?" From the point of view of the club scene, it means that fewer and fewer people are interested in playing clubs "for the duration" any more. They don't want to put in the time necessary to develop the skills that are required to entertain people over a five-set *night*—let alone a five-week stand. And the sad part of this situation is that those groups who take the "quick road" described above find—more often than not—that they fall off just as quickly as they got on. The primary reason for this is that they don't possess the originality or the simple rudimentary performing skills to really carve a permanent niche in the "big time." Record labels and promoters are always searching for the "next big thing," and a new group has only the briefest possible chance to make an impact before the people who "discovered" them are ready to dump them for something even newer.

> "If you're going to be good at entertaining people, you have to *practice* entertaining people, and that means going to where the people are."

What has all this got to do with playing drums in clubs? The irony of the situation described above is that the place where our aspiring band might actually have developed that originality and skill was the place they couldn't wait to get *out* of: the clubs.

Why do baseball teams have a farm system? Because players often need several years of careful seasoning and experience before they're ready for the big leagues. The music business is very much the same. Have you ever noticed that groups or artists who are often dismissed as "dinosaurs" still fill concert arenas and stadiums? Groups from the late '60s and early '70s—or solo artists who were members of such groups—generally put on shows that are of a higher standard of quality and professionalism than those of many of today's new artists. The difference isn't necessarily talent; the difference is *experience.* And I don't mean the experience they've gained over the years as "hit" artists; I mean the experience they gained in the club scene of the '60s and '70s. Concert activity then was nowhere near on the scale it is today, so the clubs were the proving ground for many of today's veteran artists.

It's simply impossible to develop any kind of stage presence or presentational skills—much less any sort of original personality—when your entire professional experience consists of a year of air-guitar (or air-drumming) along with your favorite MTV artists and then six months of reinforcing that cloning process in your garage or basement in front of a few friends. The thing that develops musical chops, stage presence, the ability to deal quickly with the unexpected, and the mil-

lion other elements that make a performer entertaining, is *practice.* If you're going to be good at entertaining people, you have to *practice* entertaining people, and that means going to where the people are and putting your best efforts out for their evaluation. When you do, you're going to learn—quickly—whether they find what you have to offer acceptable. If they do, you polish it; if they don't, you change it. But you can't undertake this testing and maturing process in front of arenas full of people—not if you expect to survive in the business very long. You have to do it in clubs, and you have to do it long enough to develop the qualities necessary for long-term success. Once you have those, you can make the choice of whether to stay a successful, gainfully employed club musician or try for the "big time." No matter which choice you make, you'll be *prepared* to meet the challenges you'll face. You'll *have* the originality and skill that I mentioned earlier. These assets will combine to make you an undeniably desirable commodity—as a career club player or a concert superstar.

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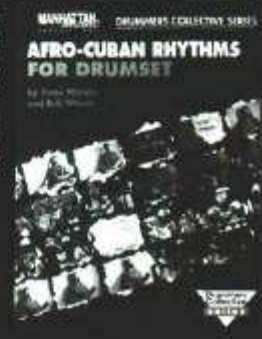

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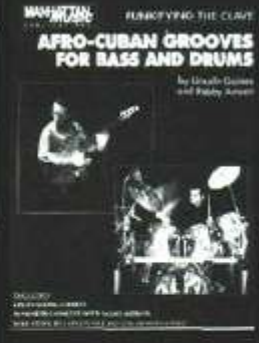

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Filling In The Holes On The Hi-Hat: Part 3

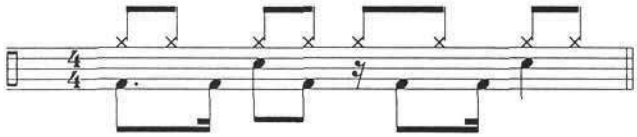
Photo by Rick Malkin

by Rod Morgenstein

MUSIC KEY

The past two articles have dealt with creating linear beats by taking syncopated snare/bass patterns and filling in the open spaces or holes on the hi-hat. Up until now everything we've played has involved some kind of snare/bass/hi-hat combination. Let's see how we can expand on this idea and utilize other sounds on our kit.

Take the following beat:

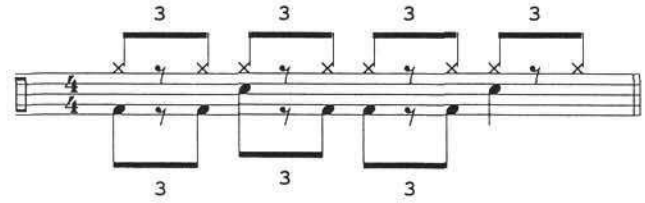


Leave off the traditional hi-hat part,

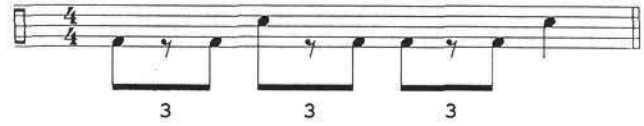
and apply the fill-in-the-holes technique.

Now let's spice up this beat by applying various hi-hat notes to the toms.

Let's try the same process with the following shuffle pattern.



First, leave off the hi-hat part.



Now apply the fill-in-the-holes technique.

And once again, spice things up by replacing certain hi-hat notes with the toms.

Next time we'll explore some other ways to apply this technique to the drumset.

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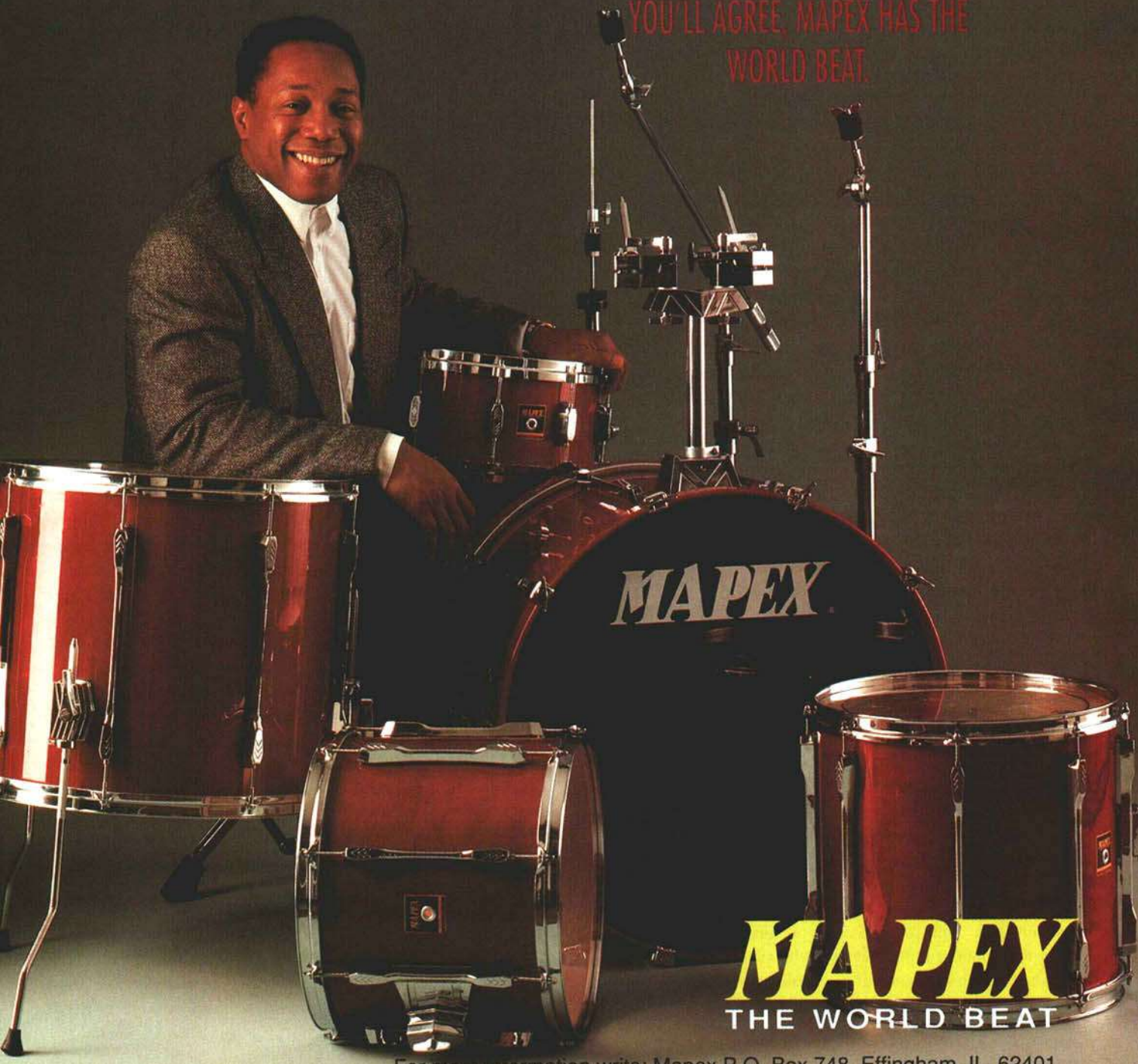

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Subbing A Show: Part 1

by Tom Oldakowski

This is the first in a series of articles about subbing on a show and playing shows in general. Mostly we'll look at Broadway shows, but much of what we'll cover is equally applicable to ice shows, circuses, nightclub acts, and so forth. And I'll be talking specifically about my experiences playing shows on Broadway and as staff drummer for the last ten years at Radio City Music Hall.

"Subbing" is playing a show in place of the regular orchestra member. While in an emergency that might mean sight-reading the show, subbing usually requires learning the show. We'll cover how to get started, who hires the sub, how to learn the show, and what to expect. Subbing is a great way to build your reputation, increase your abilities, and meet new musicians. It may even lead to getting your own show gig.

First, be sure that you're ready to sub. This requires an honest and accurate assessment of your abilities and experiences. Ask yourself the following questions: How is my reading? Can I follow a conductor? Can I comfortably play with a wide range of dynamics—*especially* softly? Can I play all the styles that may be required, such as swing, two-beat, rock, military, classical, Latin, and ragtime? Am I comfortable playing with a large band? (Broadway orchestras usually contain 22 to 25 players; Radio City uses a 35-member orchestra.) Can I play a steady tempo even when others are pulling the tempo one way or another? Am I able to let the tempo "move" if the conductor needs to change it? Can I comfortably play with a click track or drum machine?

"Subbing is a great way to build your reputation, increase your abilities, and meet new musicians. It may even lead to getting your own show gig."

The assessment of your abilities by a teacher (or by another drummer who has done show work and who is familiar with your playing) can be very helpful. If you are weak in any areas, organize a plan of study to improve them. An experienced teacher can be invaluable here. His show expertise will assure you of correctly learning those skills needed to successfully play a show. And most likely you'll learn some helpful "tricks" or short cuts.

If all you need is more experience, you can get it by playing local school or community theater productions. Since these are not professional groups, they are safer places in which to make mistakes and gain experience. Remember, the professional musician community is quite small, and news—especially bad news—travels fast. So don't make your "learning" mistakes on Broadway and ruin your reputation before you get started.

Once you've assessed your skills and experience and have decided that you're ready to sub, what's next? Find out where there are shows in your area. (Look in local papers and ask friends.) Find out who is playing your instrument at each show. (Ask fellow musicians and music teachers or check the show's program for a listing of the orchestra personnel.) Then find a way to meet them.

It would be ideal to have a friend who is in that show's orchestra or is a respected player in town—someone who could introduce you and vouch for your playing ability. Find out where these musicians hang out, where they play other gigs, where they work out—any place where you can meet them face-to-face. Phone calls may work (especially if you have a mutual friend who suggested you call), but I've had better success starting a friendship with a face-to-face meeting. And that is what you need to do: make friendships. Remember, most people will not trust their gig to someone who isn't a friend. Be yourself and meet as many musicians as possible.

Show musicians usually hire their own subs, which means you have to ask them directly about the possibility of your subbing. How? Every situation is different. One rule of thumb is to be honest and up-front. A pet peeve of show musicians is the phone call from a stranger or long-lost acquaintance who wants to talk about everything under the sun—and 20 minutes later says, "Oh, by the way, I just noticed that the Christmas show is starting next week at Radio City. Do you need any subs?" If you're calling about the possibility of subbing, say so right away. It's honest, and the musician will appreciate it.

Remember, this person probably has a few subs already, knows players who have more experience than you, and has friends with whom he or she has traded gigs. In short, there are other people in line ahead of you that could be used as subs. You have to give the show musician a reason to try you. Say that you would be willing to sub on Christmas, New Year's Eve, Thanksgiving, July 4th, or any time he or she might have trouble finding subs. Or offer to learn the book—with no obligation on his or her part to use you—just in case a sub is needed in an emergency. Find a way to get your foot in the door.

If the show drummer says, "Yes, I need a sub," you're in luck. If not, ask if you could watch him or her play the show anyway. This will give the regular player some time to get to

know you—and you'll probably learn something, too. Eventually you may even be called to sub. But if the answer is no, remember it means no *now*. Things may change. Stay in touch but don't be a pest. And continue meeting other musicians.

If you are invited to watch the show, find out where and when to meet. Be on time. Better yet, be early. Find out what the dress code is for the band. If it's black, wear black, not dark brown or navy blue. (Even if regular orchestra members are "stretching" the dress code, don't *you* do it. They already *have* the gig.) Remember, you need to create an air of professionalism and responsibility.

The first time I watch a show that I'm going to learn, I tape it. (Yes, this is technically against copyright restrictions. But taping a show in order to learn it is an accepted practice. Just be discreet.) For this I prefer a small, hand-held, battery-powered cassette recorder with a built-in microphone and auto-level recording. These features allow me convenience (no AC outlet or cords to deal with), good quality (record level not too low or too high), easy editing (turn cassette off during long periods of dialogue), and good placement (easy to get it near the drummer so your tape is representative of what you'll hear as a sub). Making a good tape to learn from and practice with is the most important part of the first watching.

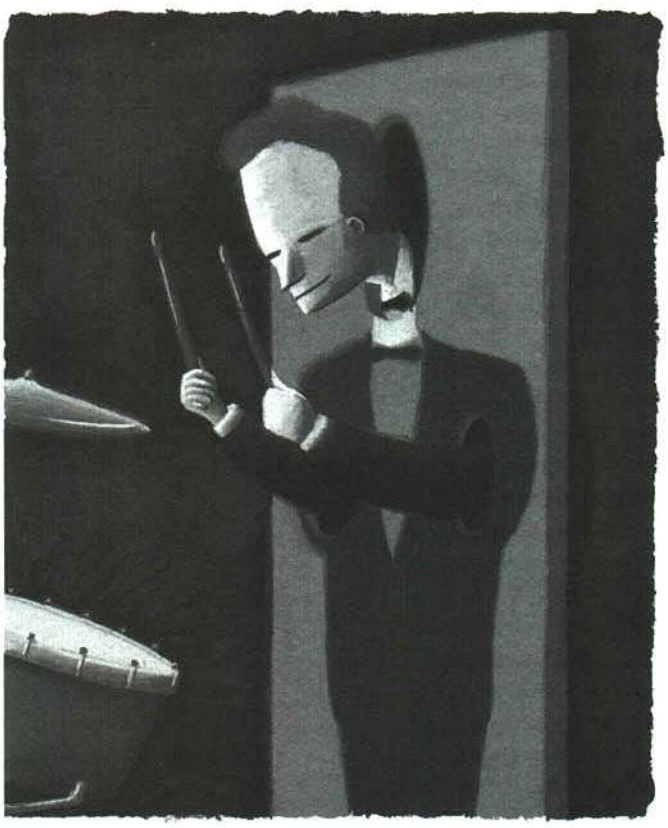

Illustration by Dan Yaccarino

Be sure to use fresh batteries (so you get a tape with accurate tempos). Use cassettes at least 90 minutes long to avoid having to turn the tape over too often. And bring extra tapes, just in case. Ask the regular player where a good place during the show would be to flip the tape. Remember, getting *all* of the music recorded is more important than squeezing it all on one tape or filling up one side completely before turning the tape over.

Also important on your first watching is the drummer's general setup and playing style. Take note of details. Where is the music stand placed? How does he or she make a page turn while playing? Are the music and the conductor in the same sight line? What are the general volume levels of the band and the drummer? What are the actual drum and cymbal placement, head tension, and stick model used?

One of the most difficult aspects of subbing is that you are playing on someone else's drumset. You may not be able to change it radically to conform to your usual setup. Therefore, analyze what can and cannot be altered on the regular drummer's setup. Then arrange your practice set just like it will have to be when you play the show. This will help you feel more comfortable when you come in to sub.

Remember, you're hired to sound like the regular player. Your job is to support the performers on stage. They could get "thrown" by anything that sounds different. Don't change the drumset tunings. (Slight "tweaks" may be okay. Use discretion.) I also prefer to use the same or similar model stick, since this helps me to sound more like the regular player. And as you learn the show, strive to play it "just like the regular player"—including copying his or her fills. That will help both the performers on stage and the band to do their jobs. And that will make you a popular sub.

At your first watching of the show, make arrangements to borrow the sub book or the original music. Then get it photocopied! Make your copy original size or only slightly smaller. (You need to be able to see the notes.) Also, make it on manuscript-weight paper, as this will stay up better on the music stand. My worst experience as a sub happened because I had used thin paper for my copy. It was the first time I was to play the Broadway revival of *On Your Toes*. During the fourth or fifth bar of the overture, my music slid right off the stand. So there I was, playing with one hand while struggling to get the music back on the stand with my other hand. Not the best way to make a favorable first impression.

Making your own book is expensive, but it has several advantages. First, you won't have to hurry in learning the show because they need the music back. Also, your book will have only your markings, and will therefore be easier to read. It will always be available for a quick review. And you will be able to make as many markings in the book as needed to ensure that you play a good show. Which leads us to the topic of our next article: how to mark your show book. See you then.

continued from page 25

career. Could you fill us in on what happened between the *Atavachron* period with Allan Holdsworth, and the invitation to join Level 42?

GH: At the time I had been working more or less exclusively with Allan. When there was no recording or touring with him, I was left very much to my own devices. There wasn't much else happening, particularly in London, where I might have been able to work as a freelancer—which is why I was seriously contemplating staying in America. It was almost a case of having to do that, so that I could maintain a working situation in which I could work with Allan, and have the opportunity to do some other things as well. I was trying to make Allan's band come first, because I believed so much in the music—and still do.

SG: It seems that you have always been very good at absorbing styles—for instance the '40s swing style for Syd Lawrence—as well as coming up with fresh ideas.

GH: Yeah. But being versatile and having an open attitude about music—as ideal as you might think it would be—has definitely worked against me. People always want to categorize you and typecast you. It's often harder coming into a certain area of music from another area.

SG: Do you find that people not only want to categorize you as a drummer who plays a certain kind of music, but also refuse to accept you as a keyboard player or guitarist?

GH: Oh, absolutely. In an ideal world I would like to be known just as much as a keyboard player—because I am one! I'm getting older now, and I *feel* more like a keyboard player. [smiles] I think in a "keyboard" way. I do a lot of work on key-

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board at home—playing, composing, arranging, writing songs. I've been working on material for a solo album. The problem is that the material I intend to do crosses categories. Record companies think that this is going to lose people. There are different sides and elements to the way I feel about writing and playing, and I would like to be able to present this in an honest way. I suppose that when you come right down to it, I'm best-known now as the drummer in Level 42, so they expect another Level 42 album from me! In this case I am *not* intending to conform to their typecast idea, and *that's* working against me.

SG: In what positive ways has joining Level 42 affected you?

GH: Suitcases. I have better-quality suitcases now, ones that don't fall apart. [laughs] No, it's another invaluable experience, an opportunity to work with another group of good musicians and make good music. It happens that the band is *pretty* successful, but you are only as good as your last album—as the saying goes. Maybe people won't like the next one, and it won't fly half as much as the others have done. If that happens, a lot of the "fan momentum" could drop away. Nothing is totally secure. I'm a bit too old now to get starry-eyed about it. The material benefits are nice. I haven't bought a big house in the country yet, but I might be able to one day.

I think that, first and foremost, being in a high-profile band is a responsibility. There are high standards to be met and maintained. They expect that of me, and I expect it of them.

SG: This has probably become such a boring question to you by now that I hesitate to ask it, but how do you find playing with a monster virtuoso bass player?

GH: Do you mean Mark King, or Jimmy Johnson, who plays with Allan Holds-

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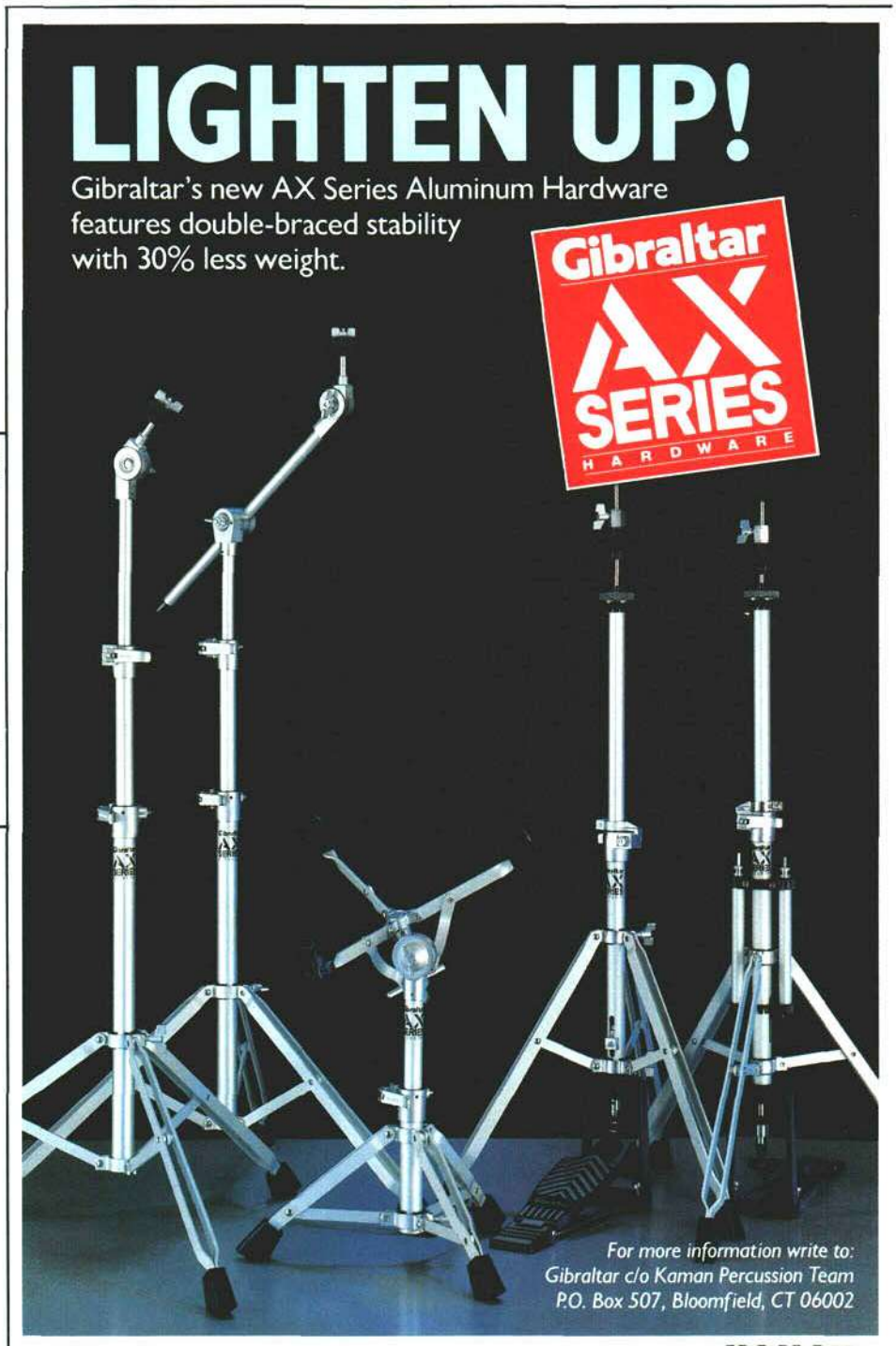


worth?

SG: Point taken; you are used to playing with virtuoso players. I meant Mark. He's like a one-man rhythm section.

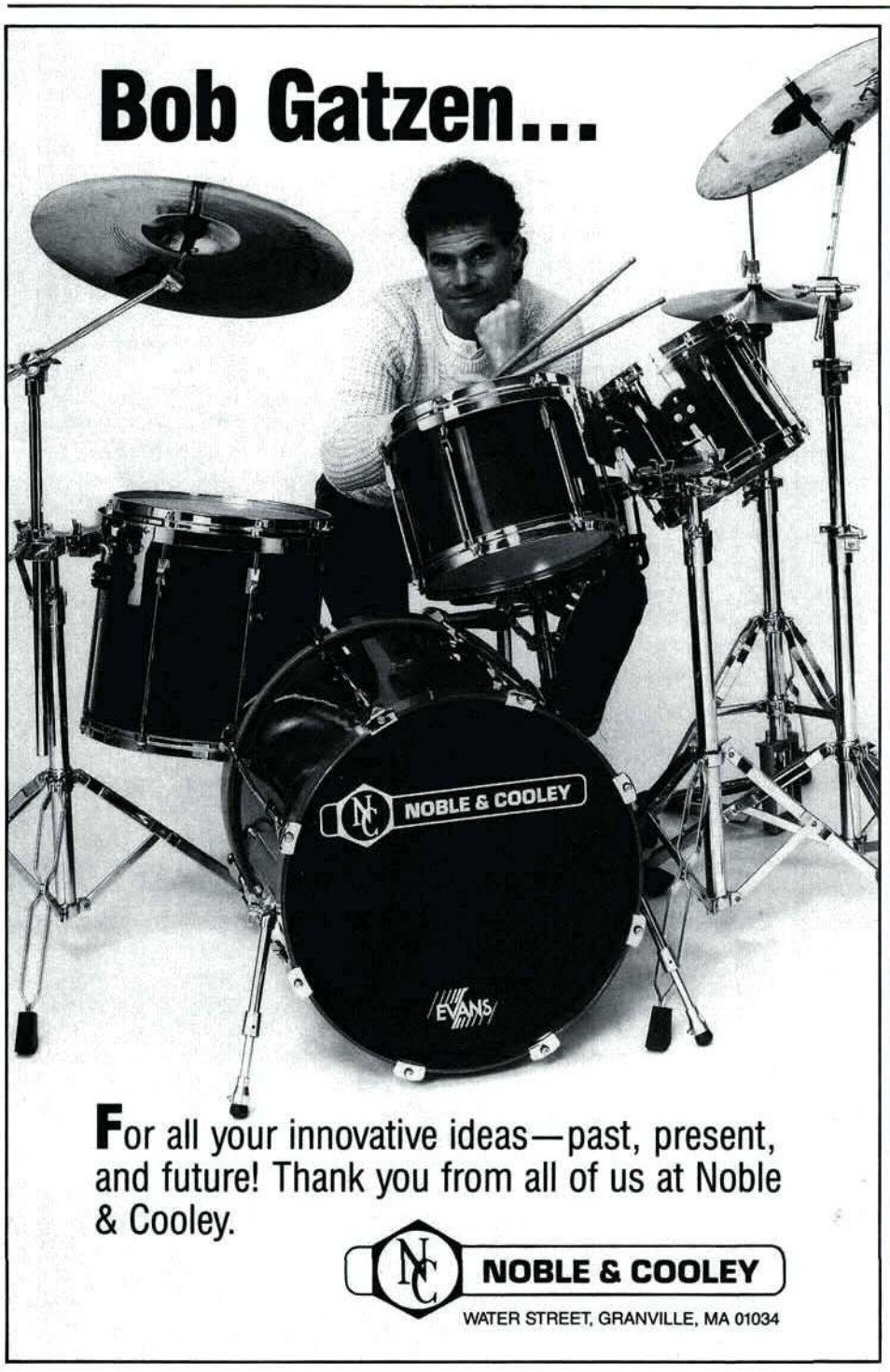
GH: You can almost hear a bass drum and snare drum in a lot of the things Mark plays—which I guess would be down to the fact that he was a drummer long before he took up bass. The way he plays is, of course, the key to the whole personality of the band. He's a great musician and a fine person to work with.

Jimmy Johnson is a completely different kind of musician, and the *only* guy who I could imagine doing the job with Allan and myself. He is a very versatile, strong, relaxed, highly creative player—and also a great friend. Getting to work with both these players in both bands makes Gary a very lucky boy!

SG: The subject of creativity keeps cropping up. Technique is something you can work on and develop. Do you think that it's possible to develop creativity, or is it something that you've either got or you haven't?

GH: Take a drummer like a Vinnie Colaiuta. He has a way of sitting at the drums, he has a way of setting his drums up, he has a very familiar way of positioning his cymbals, he has a very characteristic posture, he uses a certain gauge stick, he has drums of a particular size, he tunes them in a particular way to get a particular sound. Then the next thing you know, you go to a club and there is somebody *else* doing that, with all those elements involved and playing a lot of Vinnie's trademarks. So however much a drummer works on becoming a Vinnie clone, he isn't being creative.

Allan has a lot of impersonators, and he once said, "At the end of the day, clones don't count." That sums up the



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way I feel about it. It's disappointing to see someone cloning somebody else, rather than being himself. I was at the drummers' meeting in Koblenz last year, and Billy Cobham, myself, and other participants were invited to judge ten finalists in a competition. These European drummers were there so that we could decide who was "the best"—which I think is a horrible concept when it comes to music. Anyway, seven of them sounded just like Dave Weckl, two just like Steve Gadd—and that disturbs me. I don't think that copying other players should be encouraged to that degree.

SG: People must have influences in order to develop, though.

GH: Oh, sure. But focusing in on one player to that extent can't be constructive. They say that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, but in this case it does become an excuse not to use your own imagination—and it's cheeky. People have distinctive voices when they speak, so that you can recognize the voice of someone you know out of a few thousand others. I reckon the same thing applies with someone's musical "voice," through the person's instrument.

There's probably no one who has studied other players more than me. I've tried to imitate them and break down their styles, so that I could really discover what made them tick. I'd go into what kind of equipment they used, how they would tune their drums, how much force they would use to get a particular sound from a drum—some really heavy research. I did a lot of work on big band players like Don Lamond, Mickey Roker, Mel Lewis, Buddy Rich. The beautiful thing was to be able to catch a glimpse of whatever it was that was exclusive to them as drummers. Today I feel that all

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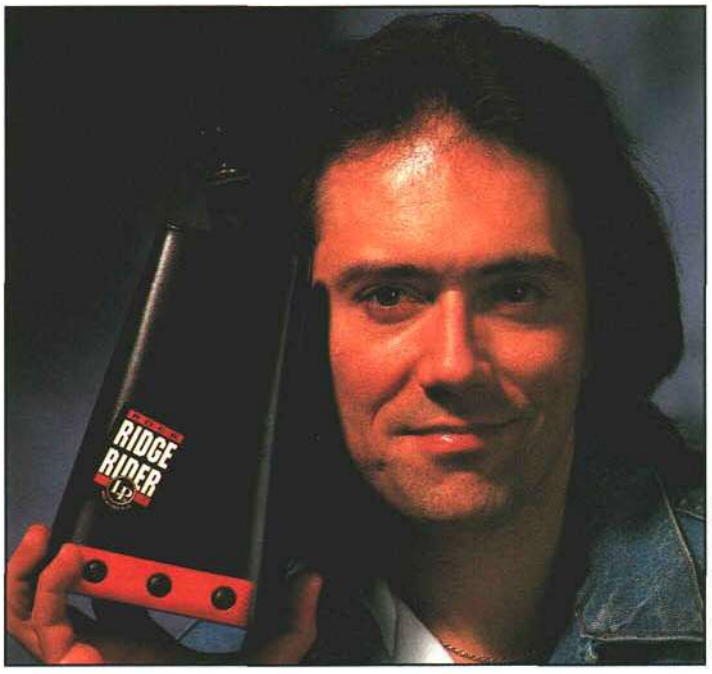

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those guys were influential on me, not just one player—not just the person who had high visibility at the time.

SG: You need technique to pull off ideas, whether they are yours or someone else's, and developing that can become an end in itself.

GH: I never think about technique when I'm playing. I sometimes suffer with some aches and pains, because I don't have a set practice routine; but that is more to do with lack of stamina in certain areas rather than difficulty in executing ideas. Technique is the facility to express yourself. It can be amazing how much you can pull off with very little technique at all, just in the essence of what you do. In analyzing some of the really heavy jazz players, I often found that what they did was actually simpler—in terms of pure technique—than I thought it was. They were getting a certain intensity, or a certain warmth, without having to utilize an incredible amount of chops.

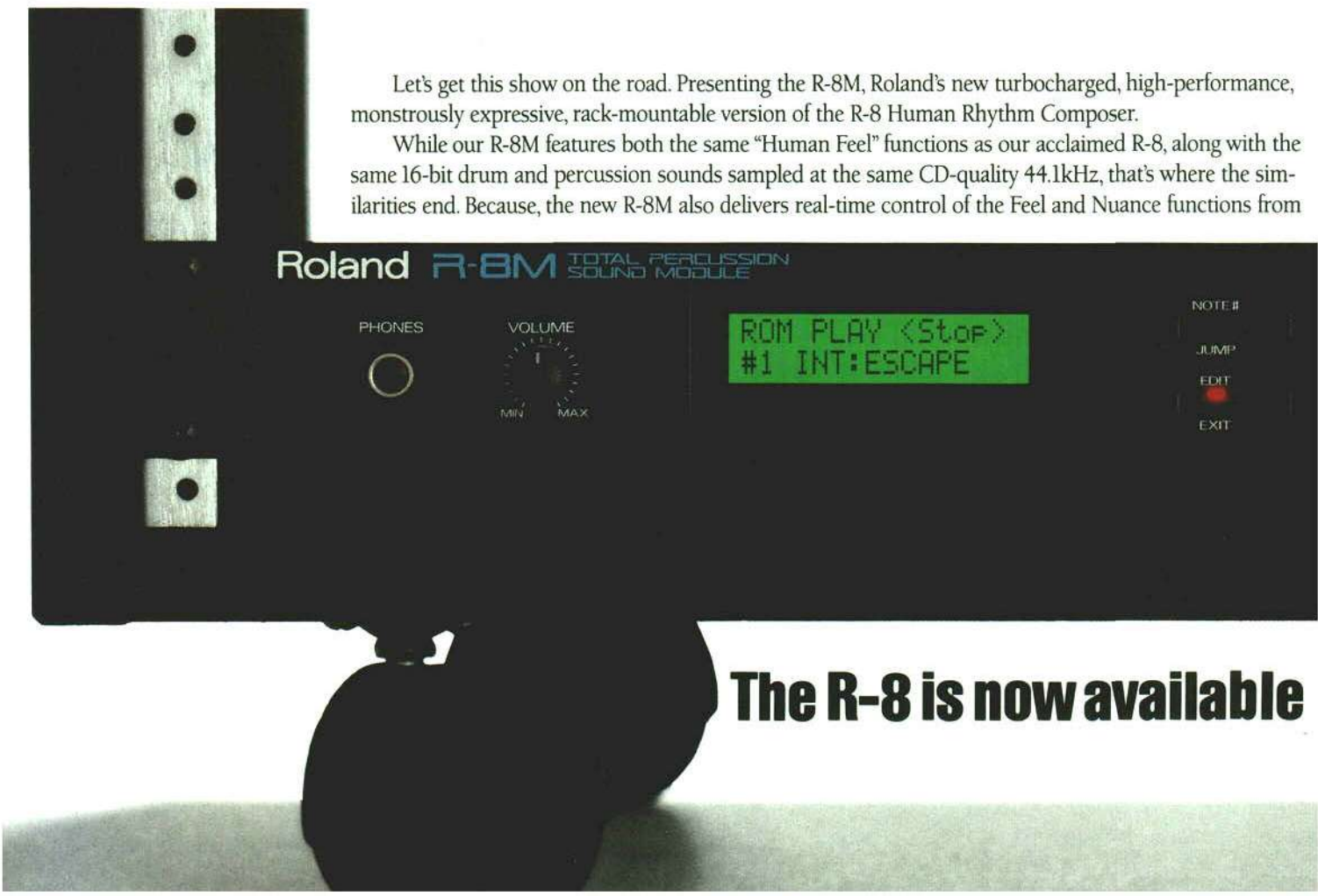
SG: Is there a tendency for drummers while soloing, rather than accompanying, for technique to override other considerations?

GH: Only if you are working in a circus! It has to depend on what you want to get across, where the solo occurs, how you are going to come out of it, etc. For instance, with Allan's band I have complete freedom, so everything depends on the moment. It's as though the moment dictates what you have already established up to that point, and your emotional instinct takes care of the rest. Often, for whatever reason, I want to break people's hearts through the drums. Other times there's a lot of humor. It should always be personal to the player and unique to the circumstances. Technique, for me, is the back room boy—the guy who sits in the back doing the accounts, while you're out front pouring your heart into the product. In improvised music imagination is your best friend, as long as you don't imagine you're in a circus.

SG: Perhaps we tend to think of technique as the ability to play more notes in a particular space of time, when we ought to be thinking of the technique of making those notes count—quality rather than quantity?

GH: You can "ghost" on the drums. When I was in the Syd Lawrence Orchestra, he used to frantically wave his arms about in front of the trombone section saying, "Don't ghost notes!" [laughs] I'm not certain that he meant this; I think he really meant that if you have a fairly difficult and busy passage to get through, you break it down to find out what is truly important and effective in the phrase, and play that. Who was it who said, "It's not the notes you play, it's the notes you leave out"? I'd rather make more out of less, and make each note count. That's been a goal in my playing.

Reading drum music has always been quite easy for me, because I came to it from piano music, which is much more complicated. I went to see a drum teacher in Yorkshire for a while called Geoff Myers, and I would find myself working from books and tackling some really complex things. But all I ever saw them for was as an achievement: "Yeah! I've done it." I was never particularly moved by any of it; and actually I've been in a lot of reading situations and nothing has



ever challenged me as much as some of those books did. The main point is being able to bring off a piece of music, regardless of the context. Not to be the guy who can read anything and play anything, but to be the guy who can use a deep musical intuition to bring out what really matters.

SG: Coming back to this business of copying other players, I would say that the vast majority of people who play drums who are not in "name bands" are obliged to copy what people in name bands do and have done. It's the only way they can work.

GH: So you are still playing what the music requires. If you're playing covers in a "Top-20" band, you must evoke the essence of the piece, and if that means copying the original.... I am very lucky to have worked with an Allan Holdsworth. It's up to me what I do, people give me the controls, and it's complete freedom. But I've worked in situations where I have had to copy a particular style. The Syd Lawrence Orchestra is a "cover band." We'd be playing "In The Mood," then a Harry James number, then a Stan Kenton number. I thought it was important for me to acclimate myself to the drum styles of the people in those bands. Everything they did was characteristic, even down to the way, say, Shelly Manne sounded with Stan Kenton—as opposed to the way Mel Lewis did. If we did something like Kenton's "Peanut Vendor" with Syd Lawrence, I would have to sound like the drummer on the original hit that people knew. I certainly wouldn't approach it like a 16-year-old, which is what I was at the time—playing it as I thought it should sound *now*.

SG: Let's talk about "now." You have developed a slightly unusual layout for your tom-toms. Could you explain that?

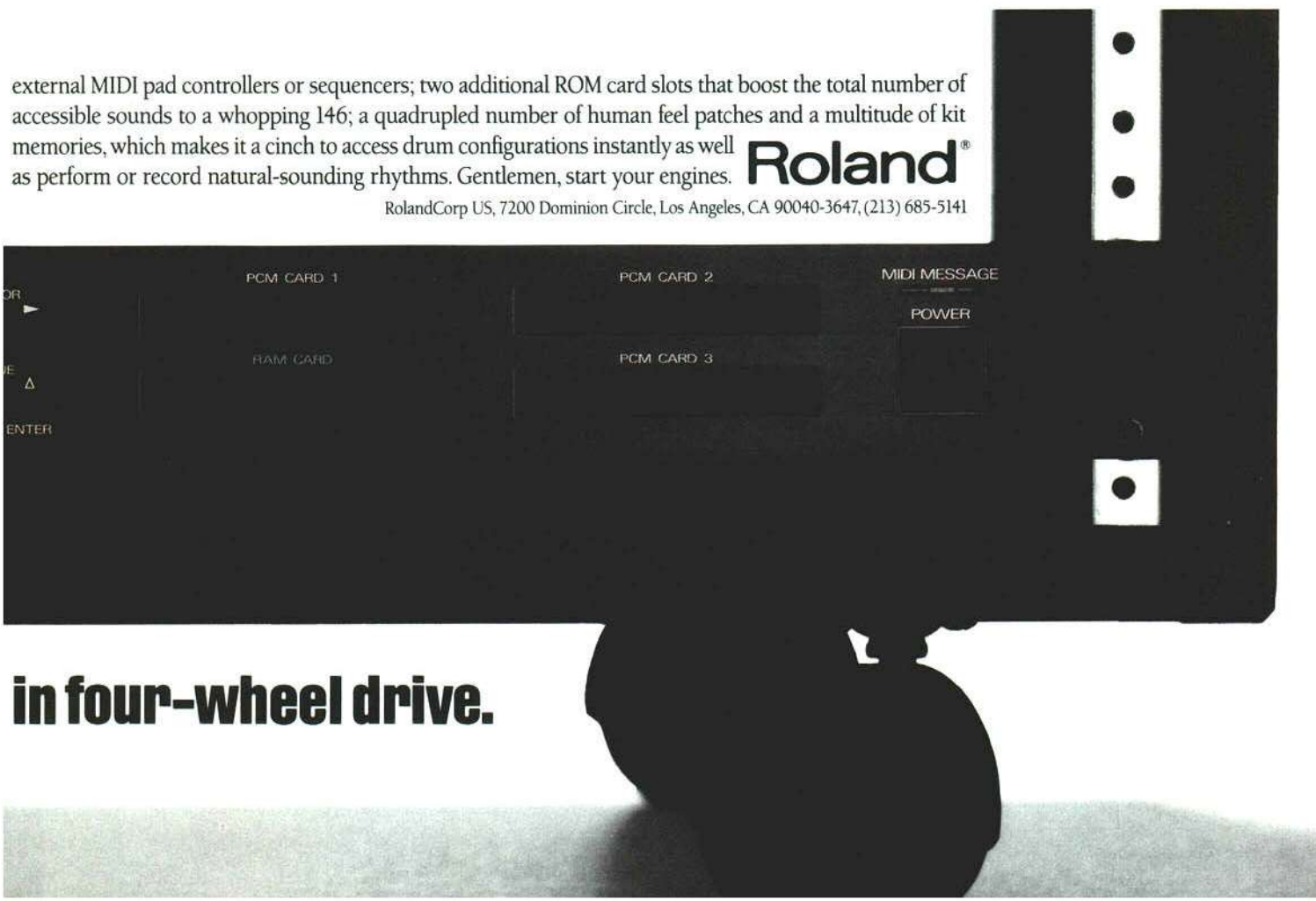
GH: It's a thing I've been experimenting with that allows me to play hand-to-hand phrasing across drums on the opposite side of the set. So as I look at it, I have a left-hand 8" tom and a right-hand 8" tom, a 10" drum on the left, a 12" drum on the right, and a 14" in the middle. It is still possible to come from high to low from the left, leaving out the small drums on the right and going from the 14" tom to the floor toms to get the conventional descending cadence. Plus there are more possibilities with the other drums there. I've been working with this in both Level 42 and Allan's band.

SG: Do you have a melodic tuning plan, with the two 8" drums sounding the same?

GH: No, I'm not interested in tuning the drums to notes. There is a type of progression in the tuning, and the two 8" drums are very similar—although I'm not concerned with having them sound identical. There are equal intervals between the drums, which makes sense according to their size.

SG: Is there more to this layout than being able to ascend or descend in the same direction?

GH: It also makes things possible that have never been possible before. A simple example is that if you are playing things between an 8" tom and the deepest floor tom, you have your arms stretched out to either side of the kit. However fast you can play, this distance limits you. You can't, for instance, change hands between the drums at any



speed. I can play some of the sound combinations that I am hearing, without having to make gigantic moves. Plus there are the things you do by accident by moving around the drums in the conventional way. They can sound interesting, as Mark King would tell you. [laughs] He's completely frustrated by this setup.

SG: Are you saying that he disapproves of you using this setup?

GH: Oh no. When he tries to *play* himself, he finds it very strange. There are no problems using it with the band. I'm not getting random pitches off it to confuse people, or anything like that.

SG: I imagine that there are fewer applications for this setup in the context of Level 42, where you play a lot of backbeats, than there are with Holdsworth?

GH: It isn't utilized with the same kind of freedom, but I guess I'm still using it all the time in that "pop" context. The small drums come in very handy where they are, and the way I'm playing patterns now is developing from the way I set these drums up.

SG: You mentioned playing hand-to-hand. Do you tend to favor executing fast patterns in this way, or do you use doubles?

GH: Almost everything I play I approach with a hand-to-hand sticking, largely because of the articulation. I've never felt too comfortable with doubles, even though they are used from time to time in a paradiddle kind of way. Single, double, and triple paradiddles and flams have always felt more comfortable than, say, ruffs or five- and seven-stroke rolls.

SG: What about the bass drum? You are known for some fast bass drum work. Is that a double pedal or a particular technique with your right foot?

GH: If I drink enough Jack Daniels the pedal *looks* double. [laughs] But in actual fact I've always used just a single one. There are combination things that I use between the lowest tom and the bass drum that have made people think that I might be using a double pedal. Actually I love the look of two bass drums, so if I ever start working on a double pedal technique, I'll be adding the extra guy!

SG: Do you play "heel up" on the pedal?

GH: It only occurred to me of late that I play "heel down." I must be in a minority, since most of the players I see are playing "toe to pedal." But it feels right to me, and I don't have any aches and pains there.

SG: You have recently changed your drum company endorsement to Yamaha. When someone in your league does something like this, one wonders whether it is to do with preference for the equipment, or just something to do with business.

GH: It's a bit of both really. I've never been paid to play a product, although I know it can be like that with certain companies and certain artists. Most companies make fine drums these days. Most of the stuff you find—particularly the Japanese stuff—has a very high standard of manufacture. The advantage to me of having a drum deal is that I can get equipment from them in any part of the world. The advantage to the company is that their product gets visibility; the name's on the bass drum when we are on stage, or when we do a video.

As far as the Tama situation was concerned, it seemed that we were definitely at the end of the road. There had been continual sour grapes about an *Artstar* kit that I'd used on several American tours with Allan. They weren't happy about me using that kit on gigs with other people. And then when I joined Level 42, they were unwilling to let me have the kit of my preference.

SG: There is the point you made earlier about visibility, though. Some gigs would give that to the product, and others wouldn't.

GH: Yes, I can see that. But I am the same person, and I would like to have a consistent relationship with a company, not something that is continually on and off. There was a good solid offer from Yamaha. I very much like the Yamaha *Rock Tour Custom* series. It's all much better for me now. I've always had a great working relationship with Zildjian; now

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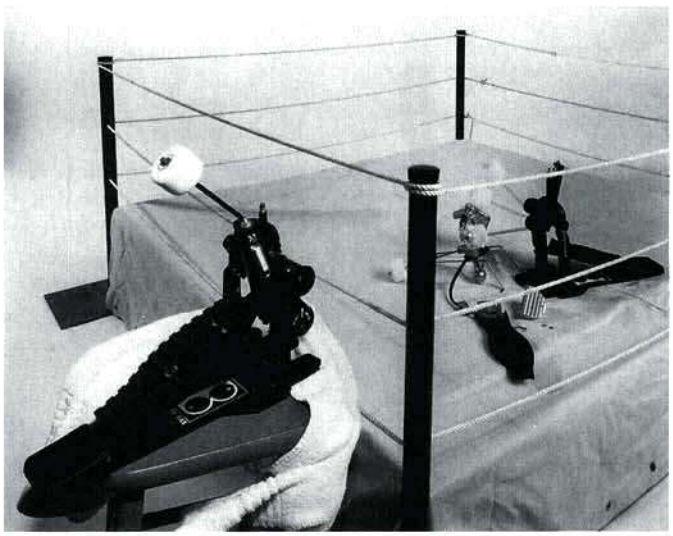

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SG: You use piccolo snare drums from Jeff Ochletree. What makes you choose these?

GH: He's been making these drums for a while now with Gretsch strainers, bolts, and hoops, and Joe Montineri snares. The shells are six-ply, rock-hard maple, with unfinished insides. I just love these special custom-built snare drums, and Jeff was one of the first people I came across who was really interested in having me play them. He came out with Allan as drum tech in America and Japan a few times, and when he started making drums, I started using them.

SG: I'd like to get a bit of a perspective on you as an all-arounder. You've been doing gigs on keyboard with your own group, and you've also done arranging for TV

GH: Yeah. I did a week at Ronnie Scott's playing some of my instrumental compositions with my own quartet. I was playing, if you like, "lead" keyboards, and I had another keyboard player, Danny Schogger, a drummer called Frank Tontoh, and Patrick Bettison on bass. It was a nice experience—the first time for some time that I'd done anything like that playing keyboards. We had some good response.

Towards the end of the week some of the "42" fans started hearing that it was happening, so had it gone on for a second week, the club might have been completely overrun by lunatic Level 42 fans. [laughs]

SG: What about arranging things for other people?

GH: I spent a bit of time doing some TV commercials, and also some music for Bastille Day. That's been a lot of fun. Another thing was an advert for Rennie's indigestion tablets. The soundtrack is Al Jolson singing "I'm Sitting On Top Of The World," which is completely redone. The producer on that wanted to do it all on computers. He wanted as few live players as possible. He maintained that it would be far quicker to do it via MIDI. It was in this horrible little night-

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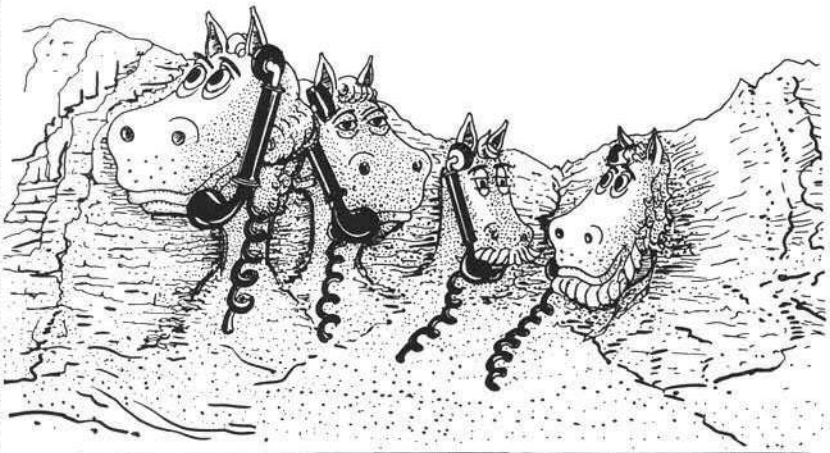

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mare of a room, where I was surrounded by all this MIDI gear. They just work on timing and placement of things. There were endless problems with breakdowns and trying to find the source of the problems. Then we had to impersonate real instruments with the *Emulator* and get them to flow into the computer. As it happened, a computer wizard came in and salvaged what we had.

My argument was that this producer thought that spending nearly three days doing this would be quicker than transcribing the original and getting 10 or 15 musicians in to play it. I told him that I could get hold of the cream of London's studio players, and we'd be able to get the track down in an hour, *but he didn't believe me!*

Using machines to that extent is, to me, quite alien. There are plenty of people who are on top of that, and are into it in a big way. But I came into this business to play, and that's the way it'll always be. Seeing bands in clubs being replaced by one man with an array of machines is a real downer for me. Also, there seems to be a shortage of places to play, which is a great problem for up-and-coming musicians. I guess I should consider myself lucky that I always had a place to play. I think it's getting a lot harder for people who want to gain experience.

SG: Is there any advice that you can give to people who want a career in music?

GH: You've got to be single-minded and determined. You can find that, when you are young, people don't take you seriously. I had that problem when I was at school. There was heavy pressure on me to stop dreaming and wake up, but I'm glad that I didn't weaken. A lot of the decisions that I make now, both as a person and as a player, are the same as I would have made then. Also a lot of the conscious feelings that were with me then are still with me now. It's a critical time when you are young. You have uncomplicated instinctive desires; it's the time when your character forms. You have to have the strength of will to not let people discourage you from achieving what you know you want out of life.

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Photo by Cameron Wong

Paulinho da Costa and Martin Cohen discussing jingle design.

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Developing The Left Hand

Photo by Rick Mattingly

by Joe Morello

Transcribed by Keith Necessary

This exercise deals with very basic coordination. Start by taking any of the exercises from the Accent Studies section of my book, *Master Studies,* and play them with your left hand. (To get you started, see Example 1.) Start at a tempo that you are comfortable with (about quarter note = 60). Begin by playing the accented *notes forte* and the unaccented *notes piano.* Once you are comfortable with this, vary the dynamic level between the accented and unaccented notes, and use your imagination.

While playing patterns with your left hand, play on beats 1, 2, 3, and 4 with your right hand on a ride cymbal or closed hi-hat. You can also use various patterns with the bass drum and hi-hats. (See Example 2.) Left-handed drummers should reverse everything.

These are only a few of the many ways these exercises can be played. They can also be applied to the right hand. Try to find ways to apply these exercises to your own situation and needs. Remember, these exercises only have value if they are applied in a musical way.

Example 1

Example 2

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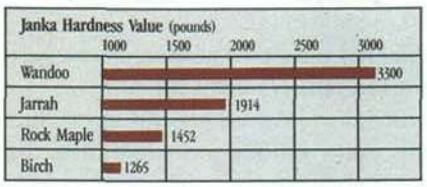

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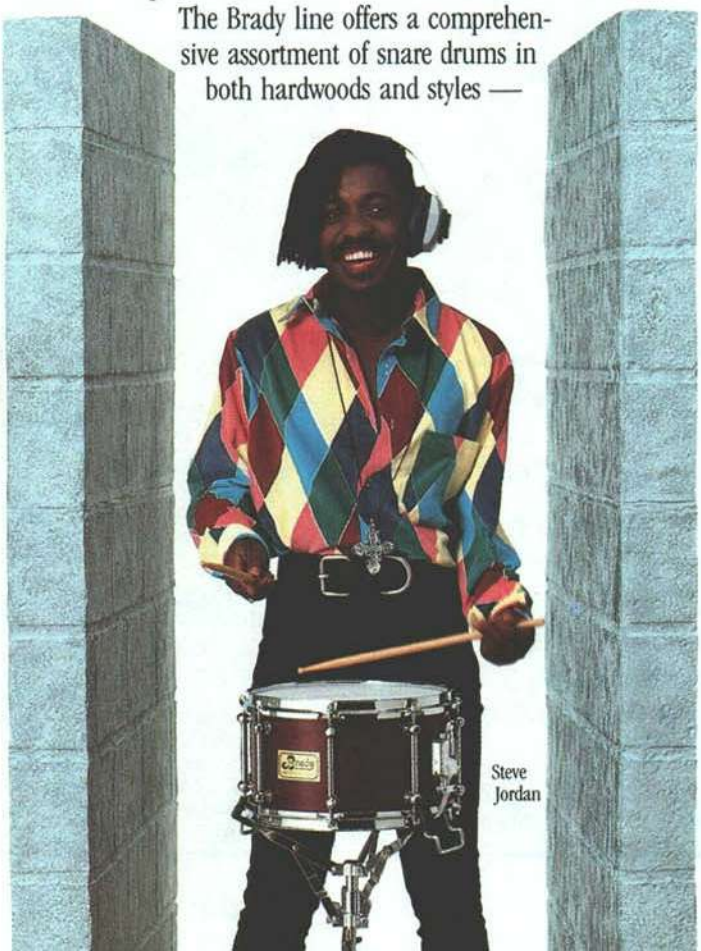

Steve Jordan

continued from page 29

But I didn't really figure it out until I did the Jeff Paris album, and then I got back into rock and grew my hair out. Then when the Cult gig came up, I said, "This is it."

RF: How much after the Michael Lloyd studio work was the Jeff Paris album?

MS: That was all kind of going on at the same time. I auditioned for the band through a friend who recommended me. Then I joined the band, and we did the album. We did a video that was all over MTV for a while, and the single seemed to be doing well. But then the label didn't want to back the band and the whole thing just fell apart. Three songs we had on that album came out on the first Vixen album, and one of them, "Crying," went to something like #10 for them. That was written by Jeff, and it's basically the same song we recorded. That was a letdown.

So then I went out and put my own band together, and we tried to do our own thing. I was tired of doing sessions for other people. I lived in a warehouse for about a year, and the band started to catch some interest, but then the Cult thing came up.

RF: Why wasn't the session playing satisfying to you? What was missing?

MS: I'd go out and play live gigs, and it was just so much more fulfilling than studio work—especially working with other producers when they're telling you exactly what to do. It didn't even feel like my playing. I'd be playing to a written drum machine part and I'd listen to the tracks and think, "God, that sounds like it could be anybody." Guys like Jeff Porcaro always sound like themselves, and they get called because they have that feel. But I was the guy who came in and it was, "Do it this way," and they'd get their drum sound. If you listen to Stewart Copeland, it sounds like Stewart Copeland—or John Bonham, same thing. They're real identifiable. I didn't have my own sound because it was these other guys making me sound a certain way. I just didn't dig that. Plus, when you're out on the road, you're gigging every night, your chops are up, and that's fun.

RF: In your bio you said something about auditions giving you confidence. Auditions can also rip you apart.

MS: One of the main ones I've told people about is the audition for David Lee Roth. Some secretary called me up and said, "Steve Vai is putting a band together," and that was it. Right away I figured it would be a Frank Zappa type of audition. I went down there, and Mark Craney was standing in line, and Gregg Bissonette was behind me.

RF: No one knew it was for David Lee Roth yet?

MS: Maybe other people did, but I didn't. It was real weird. David Lee Roth wasn't even around. A woman came out and called your name, and you had ten minutes to go in and show your stuff. First of all, it was a horrible rental kit. And it was a double bass kit, and in those days I didn't play double bass. I walked in and picked up one of the kick drums and moved it over to the side of the room, and Steve Vai said, "You don't play double kick drums?" Right there it was one demerit. He stood over the drumkit and

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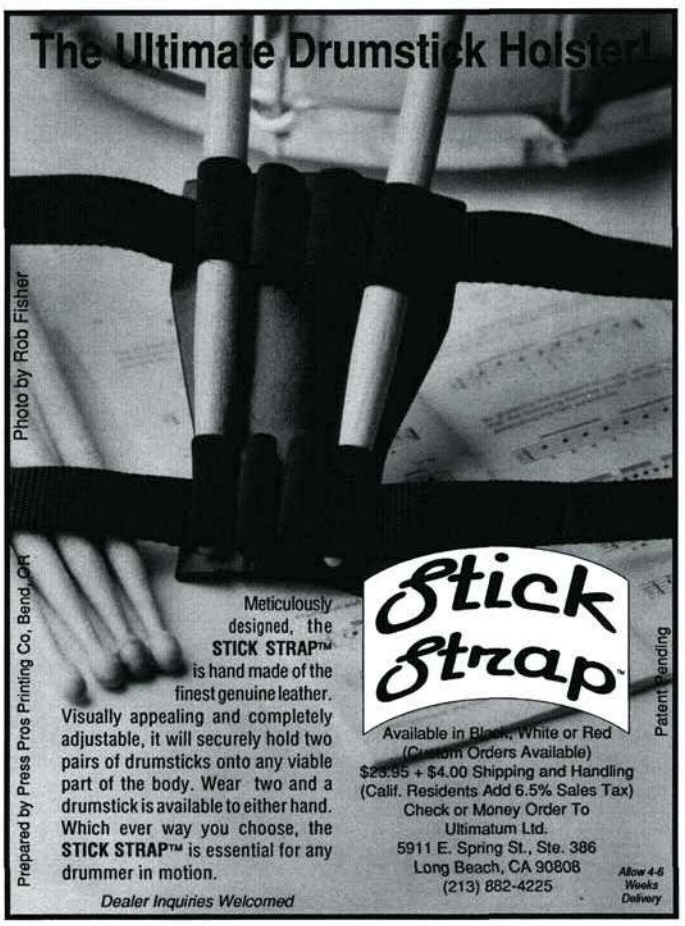

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said, "Play your fastest heavy metal beat," so I played my fastest heavy metal beat. Then he said, "Play your heaviest rock groove," so I just played the groove to AC/DC's "Back In Black." Then he said, "Play your hi-hat on quarter notes, and I'm going to say a drum fill, and I want you to follow it on the next measure." So he said a drum fill and I had to play it on the kit.

At one point he voiced some fill, I played it, and he came back to me and said, "I didn't do a flam on the "&" of 3 of the second measure." I was going, "Oh man, can't we just jam?" It was a different kind of audition. As I was leaving he said, "I'll give you four stars out of five." And that was that. Even though I didn't get the gig, though, he ended up calling Ed Mann and telling him about me. I wound up playing with Ed for almost a year.

RF: What was that like?

MS: We used to rehearse over at Missing Persons' studio, which was really cool. Ed would play vibes and stuff, and we played rock grooves and funk grooves, and a couple of odd-meter things. It was really neat. I was doing that gig while I was doing three other bands too. We were about to go into the studio, but then I got into doing an album with Tori Read and started playing with her a lot more, and then Ed went back out with Zappa.

RF: You were saying that auditions build your confidence, but how can that be when you don't get the gig?

MS: That David Lee Roth audition was tough, but right after that, I said to myself, "Why don't I play double bass?" That motivated me a bit to get better, and I started to learn how to play double kick drums. I got a big double kick drumkit. I'd say to any drummer, "Even if you don't play two bass drums, at least have a double pedal." The Cult was completely opposite. I went in with two kick drums and they said, "We're into the one-kick-drum look." But I'd still say to any drummer that you should know how to do it.

RF: Any audition tips?

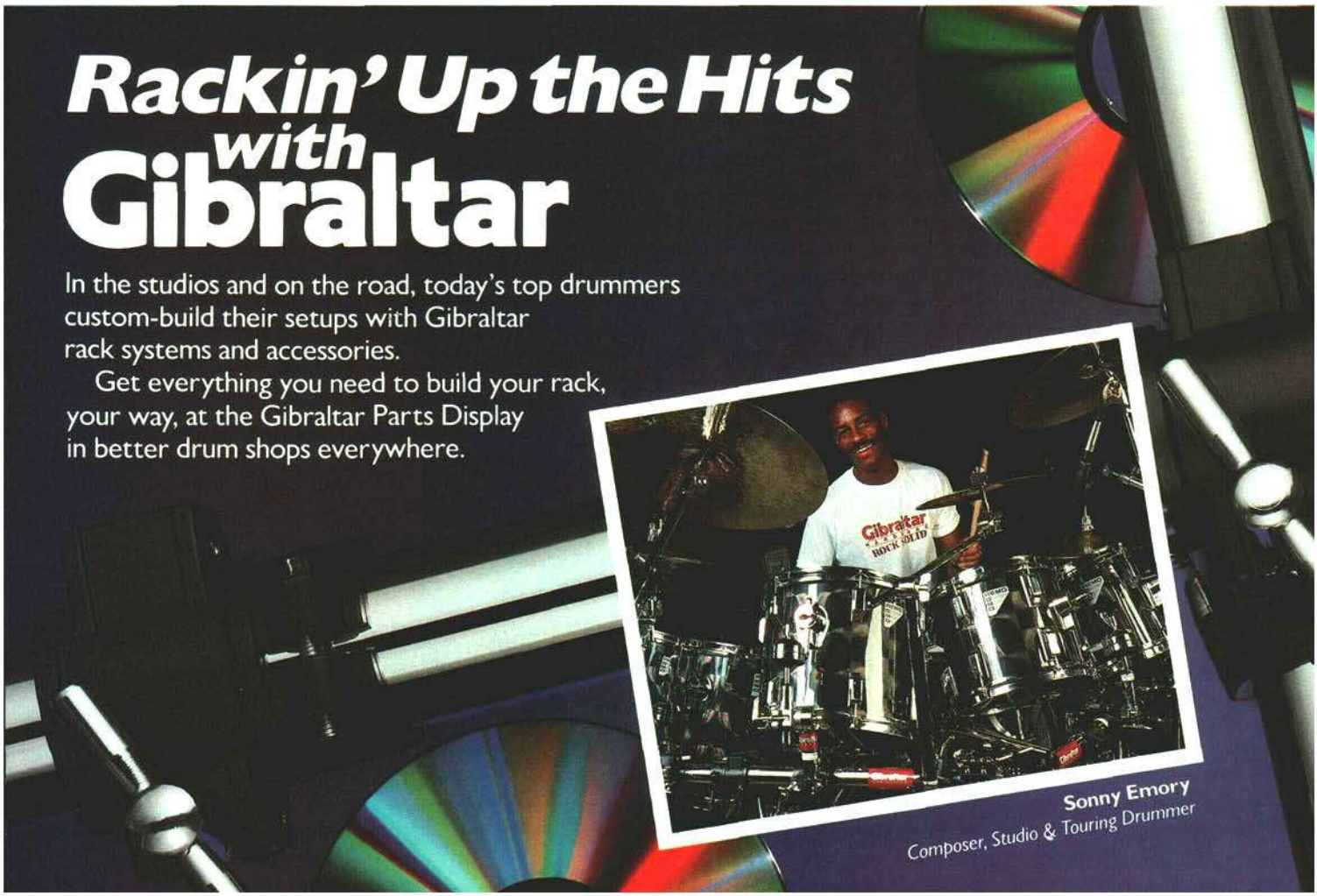
MS: With the Cult, I looked at the album cover to check out how these guys looked. You don't want to walk in wearing something that won't mix. I'm not saying look is everything, but it's important. The Cult was into a more straight-ahead look, so you wouldn't want to walk in wearing some flashy outfit while they're just in jeans. Guns N' Roses is a little more flamboyant, but along the same lines. A lot of these heavy metal bands have the big bouffant hairdos, but the Cult wouldn't go for that. You have to look at that aspect of it when you go in to audition.

RF: How did the Cult gig come up for you?

MS: I was playing around town a lot, and a few different people recommended me. The Cult is an English band, so they were looking for English players, but Steve Jones from the Sex Pistols and his bass player, Terry Nails, recommended me, as well as Chuck Wright, the bass player from House Of Lords. So they finally called me up and asked me to come down to audition. I went down, and it was a real cool audition; we jammed stuff like Zeppelin. It wasn't a real pressure situation like other auditions I had been involved with.

RF: What did you do to prepare for it?
MS: Not much, really. I picked up a couple of their albums, but I didn't go crazy learning them—and I'm glad I didn't, because we didn't end up doing anything like that. It was just to see how I played. They weren't trying to run me through this thing of, "Play this exactly like Mark Brzezicki," who played on their *Love* album. When I got done with the audition, they said, "You've got the gig if you want it." I was the only guy they auditioned. They were going to audition Pat Torpey, but he decided to go with Mr. Big. The Cult album sold about a million in a month and went to #10—it really took off. The tour was great. On my first gig we played for 15,000 people, and I had never played for that many people before, so it was pretty scary.
RF: What kinds of things did you have to take into consideration for that?
MS: The band doesn't like to rehearse a lot, first of all. We rehearsed for about three days. They're not into the heavy production thing, like, "Let's go out and play the same thing every night." They're into the real raw aspects of rock 'n' roll, which was really cool because you never knew what was going to happen next. I really had to watch Ian, the lead singer; there was no cue when he'd go into the next tune. It took me a couple of weeks to learn how to play off him.

The first gig was scary, because Aerosmith was backstage, and right before we went on Tommy Lee came up to me and said, "Bro, good luck." *And Rolling Stone* magazine was doing a review on us on the very first show, and we were opening for Metallica. When I got out there, I played everything a little up-tempo, but after a couple of weeks it started feeling really good, and we toured straight for about a year and a half.
RF: Did you have to think about things like drum sounds in front of a big audience, things like that?
MS: Well, when you're opening, you're lucky if you get a soundcheck. Basically I have a good tech who tunes and mikes my drums well, and we hope for the best. We get a line check to make sure every mic' is working. But Tommy Lee came up to me afterwards and said, "You could work a little on your bass drum," and I said, "Thanks, Tommy, it's our first show." We ended up going through a couple of soundmen in the beginning. But by the end of the tour, I heard from a lot of people that I had a kick-ass drum sound.
RF: Were there things you had to consider playing-wise in arenas?
MS: A lot of people compare the band's grooves to someone like AC/DC, so the drumming is pretty simplistic. In a big arena, you don't want to be doing some fast, flailing fill, because it's just going to get lost in the rumble of the room. I tune my toms low so they have more of an impact, although a lot of guys do differently. Joey Kramer with Aerosmith said he tunes his drums high, and he tunes them *really* high live. Mine are the opposite. He uses real small drums, and I use really big drums—not huge, but bigger than in the studio. And I use a real deep brass snare live, though in the studio I'll use more wood drums than anything. In the studio, my biggest cymbal might be a 17". But live, I'll use bigger, thicker cymbals. My first crash might be a 19" or 20", and I'll use bigger hi-hats. When you've



got four Marshall stacks next to you, you've got to do some damage.

RF: What were some of your favorite things about playing with the Cult?

MS: My favorite song was called "American Horse," off the *Sonic Temple* album. At the end of the song, there's a thing where the band plays in 3/4. But it was almost like how Zeppelin would do things, where the drummer would play in four, real steady, so that every other measure turns around and the snare is on the downbeat on the second measure. That was a tune that I used to be able to go off on at the end. The band would play a simple 3/4 pattern, and I would solo over it and go outside a little bit. That was sort of my time to solo.

RF: Did they generally want you to stay close to the records?

MS: Basically the groove stayed the same, but I changed up the fills. Mickey Curry played on the *Sonic Temple* record, and he was like the "groove monger." On "Fire Woman," I played it pretty much like how Mickey did. Live we switched up the end, where it broke down and I did a timbale solo—weird stuff like that. There was a percussionist off to the side of the stage who was actually my drum tech. I thought it would be a good idea to have at least some percussion live, although the audience didn't have to see where it was coming from. We had a keyboard player offstage also.

RF: You never did an album with the Cult, did you?

MS: The Guns N' Roses thing came up. The only thing I did with the Cult was a recording session in London where we did about eight tracks, but the last I heard, they were going to do them over. There *is* a live CD that I'm on, though.

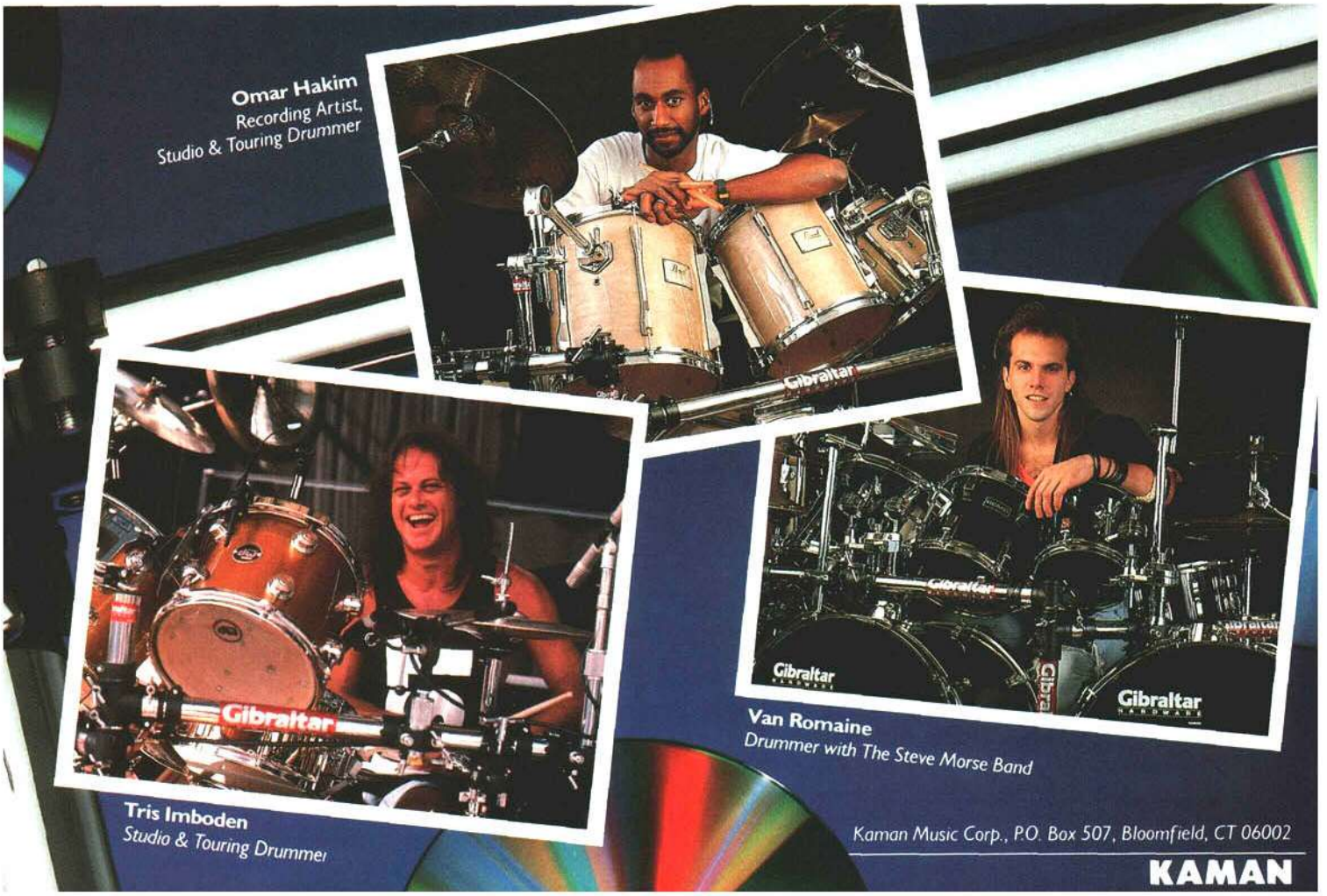
RF: How did the Guns N' Roses gig come about?

MS: I was doing the tour with the Cult, and our last two shows were in L.A. at the Universal Amphitheatre. Slash and Duff, the guitarist and bass player for Guns N' Roses, came out to the show. They hung out at the sound board the whole time. About five weeks after that I got a phone call from a producer named Mike Clink. He said, "Someone's going to be calling you, and I'm not going to tell you who." I was sitting around the house going, "Who *is* this?" I finally got the call: "Hey Matt, this is Slash. Do you want to come and record our album? Steven is no longer in the band." I went down thinking I was just going to do the album, which is what I told the guys in the Cult, figuring I'd be able to do the Cult album after that. About two weeks into rehearsals, Slash asked me if I wanted to be in the band as a member.

RF: So you weren't a member of the Cult.

MS: No, but I was negotiating that. My deal with them was that I was going to tour with them for one year, and then I was going to become an equal member. I said to Guns N' Roses, "If you want me in the band, you have to make me a member, because I already have an offer to be a member of the Cult." Guns N' Roses brought me right into the organization, and that was nice.

The shows that we're going to do with Guns N' Roses are going to be unbelievable. The Cult is a big band, and we did big shows, but we couldn't sell out everywhere in the world. Guns N' Roses does well everywhere. This next tour will be



all 50,000- and 60,000-seaters. Plus I like all the guys in the band, too, even though I was a little afraid to go into the situation after the stories I heard. But it's not like what you've heard.

RF: You rehearsed for two weeks for their new album?

MS: Yes. We rehearsed about 30 songs, and some of them are real cool. We're not worrying about formulas. We have songs that are ten minutes long. That's the great thing about this band: They can pretty much do what they want and get away with it.

RF: How was the material brought to you and then created?

MS: They had tapes of a lot of stuff. They had recorded some of the album with Steven already, although a lot of it got canned. They kept "Civil War," which had Steven on it, but before all the rehearsals, we went in and cut the track for the movie *Days Of Thunder,* "Knockin' On Heaven's Door." We rehearsed that for about an hour, got the groove, and went in. That was my first day of playing with those guys, but we had to get the song done because the movie was going to be out the following week. They played the live video that Steven played on, which was weird, but it's me you hear on the radio.

RF: So they brought you demos with Steven on them?

MS: Maybe about five of them, but the rest were just them sitting around the house with acoustic guitars. When we met in the studio, a lot of other songs came up as we were recording. Axl walked in a couple of nights with some songs he played on piano. We always tracked live, no click tracks ever. There were some tracks where Axl played piano and sang live, too. It's a real live-feeling band.

RF: What were some of your favorite things to record with them?

MS: My favorite is probably a song called "Coma." The song is about ten minutes long and has a lot of different kinds of parts. It starts out real heavy, almost like Metallica or something, and then it breaks down into a Pink Floyd thing. I overdubbed some timpani over it, and I used a gong on it. I warmed up the gong with a *Superball,* which makes a really eerie sound, like you're under water. I have some really eerie effects in the middle where I use triangles and shakers and stuff.

There's a song called "Locomotive" that I like a lot, which is about eight minutes long. It has kind of a funky groove on it, sort of like "Welcome To The Jungle." At the end it goes into something that almost sounds like "Layla." It goes out with a lot of Phil Collins-type tom stuff. I did timbale overdubs on the end fills.

Then we did some big ballads where Axl asked me if I could sound like the drummer from Elton John, Nigel Olsson. So I did big Nigel Olsson-type fills and stuff. We also re-cut the Wings tune "Live And Let Die," but much heavier than the original. It's basically the same arrangement, but with heavier guitars, and it's not as orchestrated.

We're going to put out a double album, and then try to tour for two years straight without stopping. And then we're going to put out another album a year from now—we have enough material already for that—and then we have four punk

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songs that we're going to release as an EP. There's one by the Damned, one by Fear, one by the Sex Pistols.... We played all four songs in the studio live one day—just bashed it out, first take, real sloppy, but like the old punk stuff. If we decide to play that stuff live, it's going to be great. When you have 100,000 kids out there, they want to hear energy.

RF: What would you say this band requires of you as a drummer?

MS: This band requires a lot out of a drummer, but mainly energy. To be able to go into the studio and cut 35 tracks was...well, by track 35 I was pretty beat. It took a month, but we only like to do two tracks a day, regardless of how long it takes. There were days when I felt really good and I could have done ten, but they didn't like to work that way. The attitude is how everyone feels, not just one person. I had to sacrifice sometimes because even if my drum track wasn't the greatest, if everyone was happy with it, it went. That's how this band works.

RF: How many takes would you normally do on a song?

MS: Two maybe. Those tougher songs maybe took six, but the band doesn't believe in punching in anywhere, ever, so those eight-minute songs had to make it all the way to the end. On the song "Coma," I made it all the way through the track and then blew the last fill. When that kind of stuff happened I'd say, "Can't we just punch that in?" "No way, sorry." They like the consistency, and if the band moves around and makes it all the way through, that's the real stuff. That kind of stuff was hard; that took a lot out of me, recording ten-minute songs.

RF: Did you use anything to just dial up the tempo?

MS: Yes, I did dial up some tempos, but usually once we got in the studio...Slash is real good with tempos, and he likes stuff real up. With the Cult, we were into playing everything back, slower and heavier. With Guns N' Roses it's faster, more energetic, so there's a lot of stuff that's real up on the album and on top of the beat. And live, that's going to work great. When we'd take some of the stuff off the *Sonic Temple* album with the Cult, it didn't work because it didn't always get the crowd moving. With Guns N' Roses, in the studio we played it just like it was live. They stood in front of me, and everyone jumped around. It was a lot of fun.

RF: You said something before about touring for long periods of time—if you can handle it. I wondered what "handling" means. What do you have to look out for?

MS: The Cult toured at a pretty frantic pace. We went four months with Metallica to start with, and we took no time off—five, six nights a week. It might be three nights on, one off, two on...but that one off was always a traveling night where we had to drive 750 miles on the tour bus. When you bounce around on a bus, you really don't get proper sleep. For me, it was my first big tour, so it was one big party after another. Then we took one week off and went out on tour with Aerosmith, and that was, "Wow, I grew up with this band!" Being able to tour with them and hang out with Steven Tyler was another big wow. But the pace was frantic. Then we took two days off, rehearsed for a day, and started our

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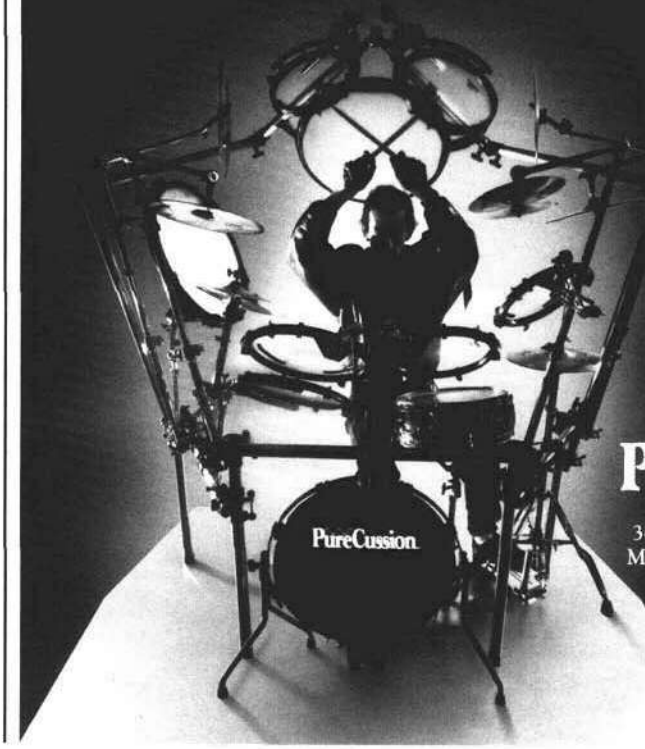

Jojo Mayer

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headlining tour. We headlined through England and then over to Canada in 40-below-zero weather. You have to be able to handle the bus for that long. But I dig it, I'm a road dog.

RF: You mentioned that the Cult liked to play things a little more back, and Guns N' Roses likes it a little more forward. Do you anticipate having to pace yourself through a show?

MS: Oh yeah. At the beginning of the Cult tour, I really got tired, even though we were only playing about an hour as an opening act. My hands got really torn up, since I was hitting hard all the time.

RF: What did you do to take care of yourself?

MS: That was really hard to do, especially in cold weather. My hands would blister and crack. I'd tape them up and do what I could. I wasn't really into using gloves, although Pro-Mark is getting into gloves, and I'm going to try those out. For a rock 'n' roll show, you've got to play hard and put a lot of energy into it and be consistent every night. That's what I try to do. There might be a night when you're really tired or you might have gotten only a couple of hours of sleep. But I don't want to go out one night and not look like I'm having a good time.

I've had the flu so bad on the road where, before I went on stage, I didn't think I could do it at all. The paramedics come and give you oxygen and pump you up with a B-12 shot, and you get up there. You have your tech put a pail next to the stage so that between songs if you need it, it's there. Once you get up and start playing, the adrenaline takes over and you can be dead sick and still manage. Then when you get done, you're dead again. One night in Minnesota I had to run off stage. It was horrible; it's a nightmare, but the gig must go on.

This Guns N' Roses tour is going to be paced a little better, though. We're going to do real big shows and take a few days off, and we're going to be flying, so it will be a little easier. With the Cult we had to move fast, because if you don't, you don't make money. If you take two days off, you're still paying everybody.

RF: What about the pacing of the individual show?

MS: I'm just going to have to get in shape, do some jogging for about a month to build up my endurance. When I rehearse, I'm going to get my hands ready before I go this time. I'm just going to break them in now by playing hard. I don't want to get out on the road and start playing hard and all of a sudden have my hands be in pain. Some drummers say, "You've got to hold the sticks this way," but rock drumming is a whole different thing. You don't sit there and be all technical. Plus, I play with pretty big sticks—*Maxxum 419s* by Pro-Mark, which are like a long *2B.* So I've learned to get my hands in shape from the last tour.

RF: With Guns N' Roses, you'll use single bass?

MS: Yes, but with a DW double pedal, although I didn't use any double bass drum on the album. I threw in a couple of fills one time and they went, *"eh."* So basically it's real old-school, single-kick-type stuff. I use the double pedal on "Crazy" in the middle during the guitar solo and on "Coma."

RF: Can you tell us about your setup?

MS: I use Zildjian cymbals. Lately I've

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been playing real big cymbals—20" and 22" crashes, just for volume. I'm using a 38" gong behind me on "Coma," and we're doing the theme to *The Godfather*—heavy metal version, just for laughs—so I use the gong on the end of that, too. I use quite a bit of cowbell with this band, on "Welcome To The Jungle," for instance. I have it mounted over my ride cymbal. I also use two hi-hats, one remote and one regular. And as for drums, I'm using the new Yamaha *Rock Tour Custom* kit, with an 18x24 power kick drum, a 14" rack tom, and 16" and 18" floor toms. The only thing I'm using that is a little bit different is a 12" snare drum by Joe Montineri on my left side. I change my snare drums a lot. Sometimes I'll use the carbon fiber that Yamaha gave me, and sometimes a brass 6 1/2 x 14. It depends on the night.

RF: For the live show, will you stick close to the records on the old material?

MS: I think there's some good drumming on that first album. It's real simple, and there's not a lot I would change, except maybe a few fills. But the basic groove is there. Steven plays differently than I do, he's more of a basher than I am. So I'll be playing it a little bit more my way, I guess.

RF: Is there anything you do on the road to stay in shape?

MS: We're going to be bringing a gym out with us this time, and we're going to take a couple of bikes with us. I ride a Harley, and that kind of stuff breaks up the monotony. I'm going to bring a little studio with me—because I play a little bit of keyboards and guitar—instead of having to go out every night looking for something to do.

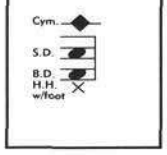
RF: This must be very exciting for you.

MS: It's going to be *real* exciting. We're going to be playing some places I've never been, like India. I know we're doing Japan and we're going to New Zealand, where I've never been. We can go to a lot of places other bands can't because we're real big everywhere. I once went to Thailand on vacation with the guitar player from the Cult, and we saw posters for Guns N' Roses all over the place—and they don't even have record stores there. It's going to be a neat experience.

Endurance Exercises

by Tommy Campbell

MUSIC KEY

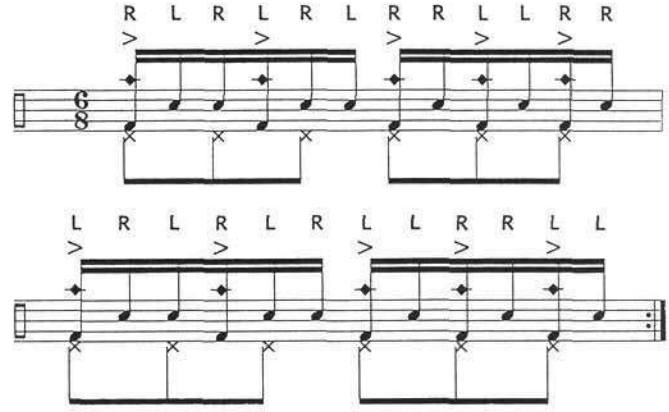


The following three exercises are designed to work your entire body. They involve leading with both hands, and moving your hands a bit of a distance (in a short amount of time). They should help you to get used to moving around the kit in some different ways. These movements may seem uncomfortable to you now, but they should become second-nature after a while.

Exercise 1 is made up of two ideas. The first half of the bar is a single-stroke roll in triplet form with cymbal, bass drum, and hi-hat embellishments. The second half of the bar is a broken-up double-stroke roll, moving from the cymbals to the snare drum with bass drum and hi-hat embellishments. I recommend practicing both sections individually before playing the entire exercise.

Once you try this exercise, you'll see that by following the notated stickings, your hands will be moving back and forth from cymbals to snare in a short amount of time. As you work on it, you'll find that you'll be able to come off of crashes faster and more cleanly.

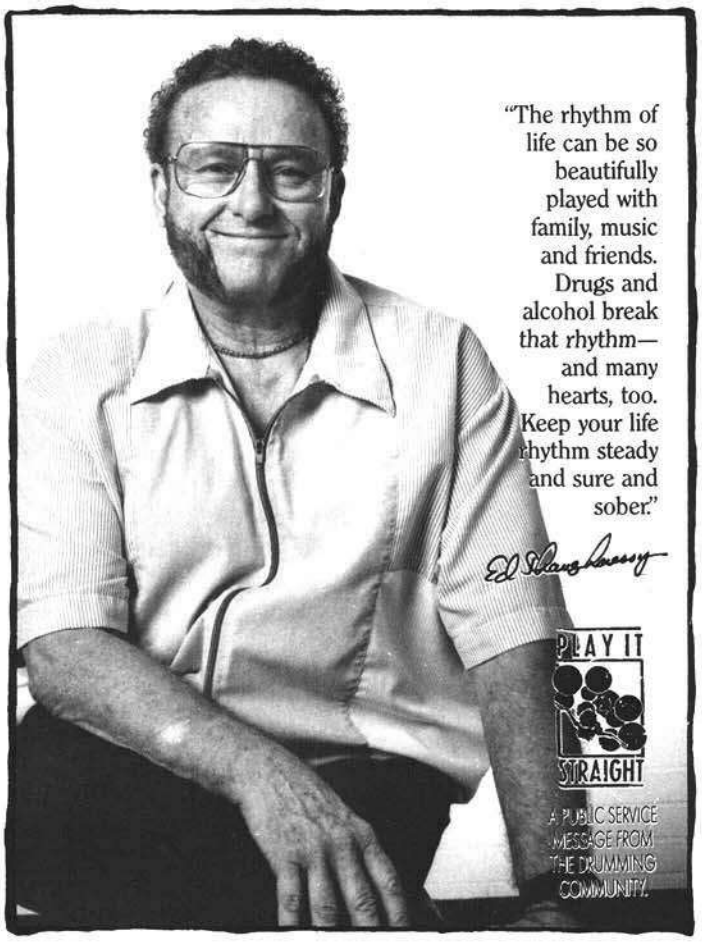
One final pointer for Exercise 1: When playing it with the correct accents, I sing the melody to "I Want To Be In America," from *West Side Story.* It helps me think more about the phrasing than just the notes.



Exercise 2 is something I like to work on for getting used to accenting in odd places in the measure, as well as giving my bass drum foot a good workout (when played up to tempo). Be sure to follow the indicated sticking, and lay into the accents.

The last exercise will help you incorporate doubles into your fills.

With all of these exercises, don't be in a hurry to play them faster than you can *cleanly* execute them. Once you've got them up to a good tempo (dotted quarter = 80), play them each individually for at least a half hour without stopping, varying the dynamic level. You might drive your neighbors crazy, but you'll get a great workout. I've found that by practicing this way, when I try to apply these ideas musically, they're automatic. Once you've reached that point, try moving some of the written snare drum parts to the toms—that'll give you a whole *new* set of challenges!



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continued from page 33

lesson. Or Philly Joe Jones and Paul Chambers together....

KM: With the advent of CDs, it's a good time to hear a lot of that music very clearly.

KW: What young students also need is a good teacher to steer them. I hear guys in colleges who can samba in 5/4, but who can't play a strong, slow, grooving shuffle. How often will you need to play a samba or bossa in 5/4? You get called to play shuffles all the time.

KM: Getting back to your career, Betty Carter was your first major gig?

KW: I played and recorded with Lee Konitz before Betty, on the album *Lee Konitz Nonet.* That was two years before Betty. Between that time I worked with Walter Davis. I also used to play at this giant jam session called Jazzmania on 23rd Street. Mike Morganstern called me to be in the house rhythm section. From that, I got calls to play with Bill Hardman and Walter Bishop, and it just snowballed from there. Then I started doing Jazzmobile and I met Dave Bailey, who turned me on to more gigs, like Lou Donaldson.

KM: If a drummer comes to New York, has the goods, and knows the tunes, it sounds to me like he or she will work.

KW: Definitely—no question about it. If a drummer comes here tomorrow who can really play, that person will have gigs, leftover work that me and Marvin "Smitty" Smith and Lewis Nash can't play. If you come to New York and you're ready, you will work.

KM: Well, you've worked a lot over the years here. What have been some of your favorite gigs?

KW: Milt Jackson is a ball to work with. His music is deceptively simple. He plays what I call "in the cracks," tempowise. Playing with Milt is a great experience. So was Clark Terry, and of course Dizzy. He's good about volunteering stuff. We'd travel together and he'd write rhythms down for me to check out. Dizzy would give me a lot of pertinent advice on playing certain rhythms.

I just finished a record with Benny Carter, the alto saxophonist, and another with Benny Carter and Phil Woods together. I like to hang out with those guys, 'cause if you're smart enough and you keep quiet, you can learn a lot. Some people my age are just too hip for their own good. The older guys are honest and will tell you what you need to know. They care.

KM: How are some of your contemporaries too hip?

KW: Sometimes cats don't want to play the so-called old stuff. Peer pressure is unbelievable. They don't want to be typecast as a bebop drummer. Some people don't realize that I'm familiar with all the styles. Some say I don't know anything past 1960, but that's not true. I'm checking out all kinds of stuff. I use what I want to use. Same thing goes for "Smitty" Smith. That cat is very talented and can go in any direction he wants. He has a lot of history and knowledge behind him. That cat can play.

KM: Is there a lot of politicking in rising to the top of your profession in New York?

KW: There is, but I'm out here to play music. If the music's not happening, I'll just go home. I'm fortunate enough to do that, because I know someone will call me to do something. I can't last [on a gig] when I'm not happy. My face tells the story.

KM: How would you define your role in the New York City jazz community?

KW: I'm an underground figure, clearly. I'm very selective about the work I take. The reason I'm not better known is that I've played with all the older cats, and unfortunately many people are just not interested. Since I'm constantly associated with those guys, I don't receive much attention in the way of drum endorsements, clinics, etc. There is a whole group of underground cats who really play well and are into something good who go pretty unrecognized. These people work on a regular basis, both recording and live, but they just don't receive a lot of media attention. The small record companies like Criss Cross, Muse, Uptown, Steeplechase, and Reservoir record them.

KM: It does seem that there are players taking all types of gigs, no matter what

the idiom or their musical preference, just to be gigging.

KW: Some of the guys who do that can deal with those kinds of situations. They do it to get ahead. They think if they can play with this particular person, it will get them to the next point. That's politics. With me, I can't hang with guys and pay compliments if I don't really mean it. Even a lot of the older cats don't tell musicians what they really need to know.

KM: On the surface, jazz seems to be pretty healthy now. Many of the labels have young jazzmen on their rosters espousing traditionally based music.

KW: But a lot of these young guys don't have any experience. They haven't logged any hours. They haven't been given time to grow. It's like this society, which is often too youth-oriented. A lot of the younger players don't know any standards, and I've been on enough gigs with them to hear it. You take them out of their own world, put them on the bandstand and start asking for standards—they don't know them!

Many of the young stars don't know any history. There are certain musicians they should be familiar with. Trumpet players should be studying Henry Red Allen and Dizzy. If you don't have a steady diet of those cats and know them inside and out, when it comes to playing changes, you'll never get anywhere. Too many guys don't know anything pre-Sonny Rollins.

It's the same thing with drummers. They should know Max Roach and Philly Joe Jones, not to mention Jo Jones and Shadow Wilson. All they're concerned with now is Jack DeJohnette, Tony Williams, and Elvin Jones. Those cats are great drummers, but there is more to it than that.

KM: You really believe that drummers' general knowledge is that limited?

KW: Yes. Drummers don't want to play the old stuff. That's why here in New York, if I need a sub for Milt Jackson or Clark Terry—two of my regular gigs—and I can't get Lewis Nash, Smitty Smith, or Greg Hutchinson, and maybe a couple others, there are precious few others that *understand* the music.

I'm not saying that in terms of ego or like I'm the only guy who can play—I'm saying it in terms of what's happening in this music. People need to do their homework. There is a high level of quality here that needs to be maintained. We're talking about playing strong, swinging time, which is not as easy as some people think.

KM: I *have* seen well-known drummers at small clubs in New York perform really loud and overplay. Why is that?

KW: They haven't really listened to and studied the master drummers. The first thing a drummer should do is play good time, and play for the band. I once saw Art Blakey ask a composer, "What do you want me to play here?" Those drummers—Art, Max, Philly Joe, Kenny Clarke—they were ensemble players. The drum solos came second. It was about playing with the soloist, giving them what they wanted.

It's a different scene nowadays. People think that if you're playing loud, it translates into playing with "more fire." I've been nixed off some gigs because they thought I didn't play with any fire, because I wasn't playing loud. But what has happened is it's turned around. Now you have to play with time and taste.

KM: What older player would a young drummer be attracted to now? I would think Philly Joe Jones, given his rudimental chops and swinging time feel.

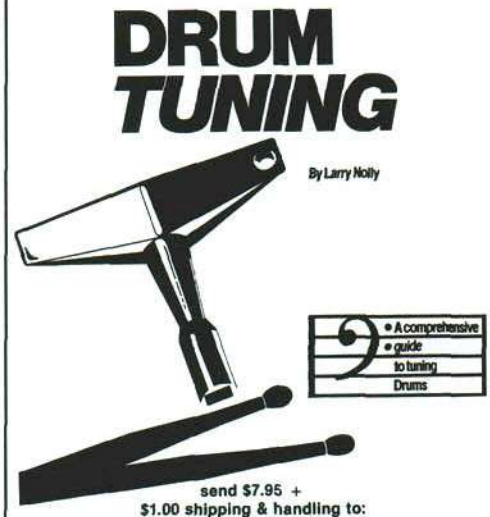
KW: If a cat's 15 years old now, the first jazz drummer he's going to hear will either be Elvin, Jack, or Tony. Don't get me wrong, I think those three cats are great drummers. They're masters of their craft, but they're also three of the most misunderstood drummers.

KM: How so?

KW: Take Elvin, for instance. He has studied all the master drummers. You can hear it in his playing even now. He was very much into rudimental chops and knows all about it. When Elvin came on the scene he played outrageously different than anyone else who had come before him. But Elvin still uses all the same rudiments that the rest of us use. He uses it all in a highly personal way, but you can still hear the tradition.

KM: Particularly in his brush playing.

KW: When you see him playing brushes



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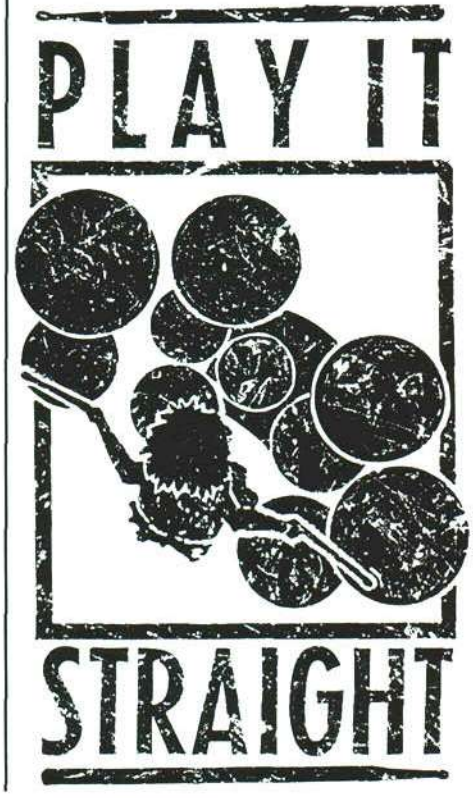

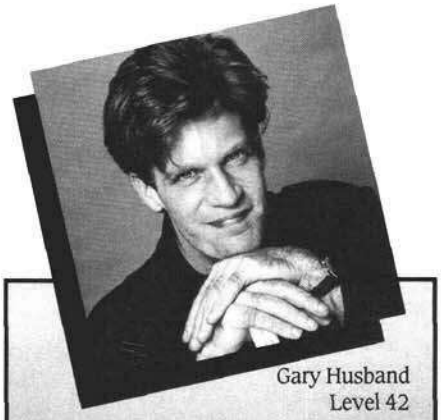
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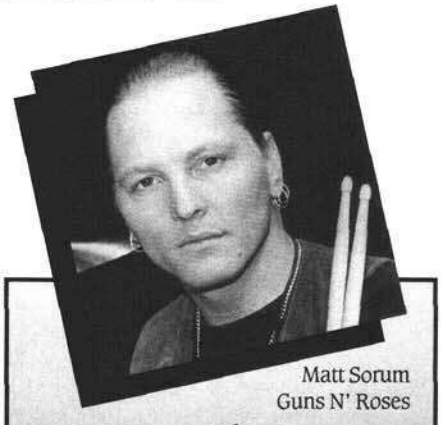
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he has his own way of doing it, but he still gets that same big, warm brush sound that people like Denzil Best and Shadow Wilson used to get.

Too often when young cats hear the John Coltrane quartet, which Elvin was a big part of, they want to play that way—play the free drum solos. What they forget is that Elvin can play drum solos in time if he wants to. Check out Elvin Jones' *Dear John C.* on Impulse. He's got a metronome in his head. He can phrase in any meter and always come out on the 1 of the bar. It's the same thing with Tony or Jack. It's a God-given talent that's been worked on and developed.

KM: Since you do have such a knowledge of the great jazz drummers, let me run some names by you and get your thoughts on what you found attractive about their playing. Shadow Wilson.

KW: He had a great big, wide cymbal beat. He could swing you into bad health, man! [laughs] From what cats tell me, he didn't like to play drum solos. But check out his four-bar break on Count Basie's "Queer Street." That break is what he is known for today.

KM: Jimmy Cobb.

KW: He inspired me because he played great ensembles. His thing was hooking up with the piano player. I loved his comping. And he had immaculate chops and could swing his butt off.

KM: Roy Haynes.

KW: Haynes, man, geez! He can play any situation. The colors and the kinds of sounds he gets out of the drums and cymbals are amazing.

KM: Sid Catlett.

KW: Sid had 17 different ways of playing the brushes. He was the biggest influence on Philly Joe Jones. He could play behind a bunch of chorus girls, he could play with a big band, or a small band. He had an incredible amount of chops, but he was really into playing for the band. He was a hell of an entertainer from the videos I've seen.

KM: Jo Jones.

KW: The master of us all. Without him there wouldn't be any hi-hat. He started the idea of playing time on the hi-hat as we know it. He is the cat who is really responsible for "dropping bombs." The credit is usually given to Kenny Clarke or Max Roach. But if you listen to the airchecks Jo played with Basie's band, you can hear him switch to the ride cymbal and play the hi-hat on 2 and 4. He would be playing accents with the left hand while he was dropping bombs on the bass drum. He did it a lot of the time on Lester Young's solos when Lester would phrase over the barline. This was five years before Klook [Kenny Clarke] and Max were doing it. He really started it.

KM: Buddy Rich.

KW: Buddy Rich was a great technician, and he really knew how to drive a band. Again, he was into ensemble playing—that cat could play, man.

KM: Chick Webb.

KW: Chick Webb was into different kinds of colors, like using them to accompany soloists; he would switch cymbals accordingly.

KM: Mel Lewis.

KW: Here was a man who was truly, truly into playing for the band. Mel Lewis was very important to me. He was one of the first guys to pull my coat to playing dynamically. He came to a joint where I was playing with Lee Konitz. Mel came in and sat in on my drums and made them sound like his own.

He told me he liked my playing but he also said, "Man, I don't like that cymbal you're using. It's not a good cymbal." Talk about being honest! I asked him if he had a cymbal he could lay on me. He gave me his number, saying, "You and I have got a lot of talking to do."

I went up to his house. The first thing he asked me was, "Are you married?" I said no. He said, "Good! Stay that way! [laughs] 'Cause you can play, man. You play good, but you play too damn loud! You could bust out the windows the way you're playing! There's no need for it. You have to adapt to what the band is doing; the band doesn't adapt to you. You young drummers never use your bass drum. If you heard a funk record with no bass drum you'd think something was wrong, wouldn't you?" He just tore all my stuff down.

KM: When I saw Tony Williams I was amazed to notice that even on very fast

tempos, he would still play a light four-to-the-bar on the bass drum.

KW: All those cats play like that. Elvin too, believe it or not.

KM: Do you do that? Do you play heel down all the time?

KW: Yes. Mel hipped me to that. But you won't hear it on, say, a Blue Note record with Philly Joe. It's called feathering the bass drum. It's something that is felt more than heard.

KM: Is the beater maintaining contact with the head?

KW: When the beater comes to the head, you leave it there. You keep the beater about half an inch away from the head.

You know, originally drummers started dropping bombs because the tempos got too fast to maintain the bass drum on all four. They would drop a bomb on 1 to let the band know where the downbeat was.

If you listen to Philly Joe Jones on "Surrey With The Fringe On Top" from Sonny Rollins' *Newks Time,* you can hear that he is feathering the bass drum for the bulk of the song.

KM: Do you approach a quartet differently than a trio?

KW: I have the same basic formula. It depends on who you're playing with also. You'd play differently with horn players than you would a piano trio.

I used to play with Hank Jones and Tommy Flanagan in the same period. What works for Hank doesn't work for Tommy. And vice-versa. Musically, I try to zero in on what the individual artist is all about. Often, I'll be familiar with a player before I take the gig. I've been listening to these guys all my life. It goes back to listening. Listening is a pleasure, that's what it's all about.

KM: If someone were looking for their first taste of Max Roach, Art Blakey, or Philly Joe Jones—who are three major figureheads in jazz drumming—what would you recommend?

KW: For Philly, [Wynton] *Kelly At Midnight* on VJ, if they can find it. [It's available as a Japanese import.] That's the best record he ever made—best sounding, too. I told Philly I had that record, and he automatically wanted to hear it. It was one of his favorites. It's interesting, because on that record he didn't play quite as much as on the Miles Davis records. He was playing with a trio, and he didn't play a lot. But what he played was incredible. I learned so much from that record, it's amazing.

KM:Max Roach?

KW: *The Complete Clifford Brown.* That stuff on there is incredible. Or Sonny Rollins' *Freedom Suite.* You should also check out Max's *own Deeds Not Words.*

KM: Blakey?

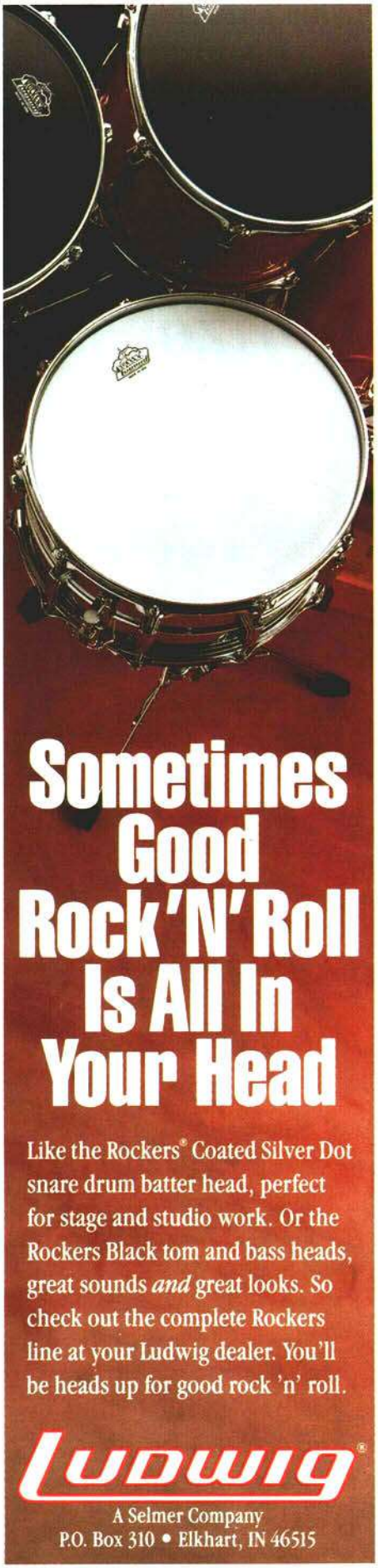
KW: The best one for me is that Miles Davis album on Blue Note, where he plays "Kelo." Check out Art playing those ensembles, man. Unbelievable. The Jazz Messengers record on Columbia with Doug Watkins, Hank Mobley, and Donald Byrd—They do "Infra Ray" and "End Of A Love Affair," and that's great.

KM: Changing the subject a bit, do **you** get more respect in Japan as a jazz musician?

KW: It's all the same. They have the same pop music in Europe and Japan as they have here. The only difference in Japan is that the hospitality may be better. They can be just as jive as they want to be, too.

In terms of music, there are people there that dig the music, just like there are people in the U.S. who dig the music. Often people don't know what's really going on. They're there because it's a happening. Say, for instance, your plane is late, so you arrive behind schedule for a gig in Europe. You get to the club and the place is packed. Automatically the musicians say, "See, they respect us here." The fact of the matter is, what else is there to do? [laughs] It's a happening, man! They don't have fifty cable channels and all-night television. Drop that same club in the middle of 42nd Street and see how many people are left.

When Louis Armstrong or Coleman Hawkins went over in the '40s and '50s, it was a lot different. The music was new, and jazz was the pop music of the times. Now it's not like that. Some of the worst things have happened to me in Europe—that's why I don't go as much. A lot of the promoters don't care how you feel. They just want you to get on the bandstand and perform.



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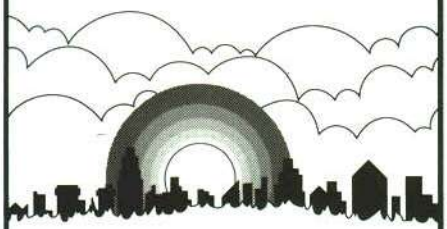

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There is a myth that jazz musicians are celebrities over there. They don't know you from Adam's house cat! They think you're from the Navy, or you're a basketball player!

KM: I'd like to switch gears here and talk about some technical things. Do you agree with the concept of playing everything with brushes that you can with sticks?

KW: Playing rudiments with brushes is good for control, to be sure. But sticks and brushes are two separate animals completely. For brushes, I insist that students buy *The Jo Jones Trio* [Fresh Sounds]. That is available on CD now, and the Ahmad Jamal records with Vernell Fournier on drums. They have to listen.

To this day, when I make a record, I think of the first sounds that I heard. Check out *The Impeccable Teddy Wilson* with Jo Jones. Also, *The Essential Jo Jones,* which is his working trio with Ray and Tommy Bryant. I used to listen to those records all day. Also, learn to play brushes with the snares off. That's the prettiest sound that you'd want to hear. Jo Jones always played with the snares off. That sound projects. You have to have your strokes together to get a good sound.

KM: I notice you really sink the left brush into the head. You get the fattest brush sound I've ever heard.

KW: In terms of the sound, I just go for what I've heard on all those Ahmad Jamal records with Vernell Fournier. I learned from Mel Lewis that the old players were using calfskin heads, which gives you a much warmer sound than plastic. People have told me my brush sound projects, but it's mainly because I grew up trying to get a calfskin sound on a plastic head, if that's at all possible.

KM: You play very dynamically—quiet one minute, then *whap*!You might crack a rimshot or a snare drum at just the right time to kick the music.

KW: That comes from people like Arthur Taylor telling me you have to build the music. Mel Lewis told me this too. You can't stay at one level all the time. You must do something with the music to shape it.

KM: When you're playing interactively with a group, how do you learn to not simply copycat the soloists? How do you be supportive and not just repeat their figures rhythmically?

KW: You have to learn when it's cool to do that. It's a matter of taste. There, again, it comes from listening. That's the whole thing in a nutshell: It comes from listening to records.

KM: I'd like to talk about your drumset. Can you run down your setup for me?

KW: I use an 18" bass drum, a 6 1/2" Keplinger snare drum—it's stainless steel—and an 8x12 tom and a 14x14 floor tom. I use coated heads on all the drums, and no hole in the bass drum.

KM: Why a stainless steel snare drum?

KW: It really projects. Plus, it sounds good in all the rooms I play. Different rooms have different acoustical problems, and that drum seems to work in all situations.

KM: On your toms, do you tune both your heads to the same tension?

KW: I have the bottom a little tighter than the top. That enables you to get the biggest sound possible out of the drum. I tune the bottom head first, then I tune the top head. I check each lug for evenness to make sure the drum is in tune with itself. I look for the fullest sound possible. I don't use any muffling, especially on the snare drum. I like to hear it ring.

KM: Cymbal setup?

KW: A 22" K Zildjian ride, a 16" crash/ride, and a regular set of hi-hats. I've never been into sizes and stuff!

KM: Only two cymbals? Do you crash on the ride too?

KW: If I need that kind of sound, yes. It's a very basic setup.

KM: Do you sit low or high?

KW: I used to sit high, but I stopped that for a whole lot of reasons. Art Blakey told me, "You play great, but you'll mess up your back playing that high."

KM: With all of your knowledge and ability, do you have any thoughts of making a solo album and getting those ideas out?

KW: I've been thinking more and more about it lately. There is so much good music out there that's hardly been

played, I don't even need to write any tunes. And with the people I want to play with, it would be a serious record.

KM: Are you happy with where you're at musically?

KW: Even though I've played with a lot of people, I still consider myself to be an underground figure. I'm not a star. I'm not bitter about it 'cause I like what I do. I'm proud of every record I've made. I've played with all the masters. Dizzy Gillespie, Johnny Griffin, Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis, Benny Carter. Being a sideman, I've played in a lot of situations, and I've gained a wealth of knowledge.

I've realized that if you're going to play the music you really love, you're not always going to receive huge recognition. But it's satisfying to have students come from around the world to study with me. Or to have people realize that I can play all the styles.

KM: Do you have a general philosophy behind your playing?

KW: First of all, I want it to feel good. I want a good sound to come out of the instrument. I get off on playing for the ensemble, playing with the cats. And I want it to swing.

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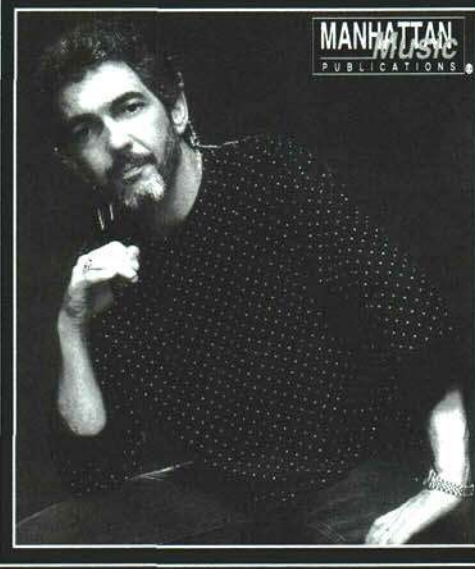

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Damn Yankees' Michael Cartellone

by Robert Santelli

It's a good thing Michael Cartellone likes challenges. The one he's currently faced with—holding down the drum chair in the hot new hard-rock band Damn Yankees—is the biggest of his career. Playing behind guitarists Tommy Shaw (formerly of Styx) and Ted Nugent and bass player Jack Blades (formerly of Night Ranger), drummer Cartellone is the no-name among big names. But Michael hopes to change that. "I know I'm up on stage with the big guys," says the 28-year-old Cleveland native. "Ted Nugent was one of my heros, and both Jack and Tommy are great players. I'm in great company. My goal is to play as well as they do and to rock as hard."

Cartellone appears to be meeting his goal, according to bandmate and arena veteran Ted Nugent. "This cat can play," says Nugent. "He knows what he's doing behind that drumset. He helps make Damn Yankees happen."

RS: How did you become a member of Damn Yankees?
MC: I had been playing drums in Tommy Shaw's solo band for about a year and a half. I started with Tommy in 1987 after he released his *album Ambition.* Then, in December of 1989, Ted came to New York with the idea of hooking up with Tommy and jamming to see if they could write together. When that began to happen, Tommy had me come to rehearsals so that they would have a drummer to play with.
RS: Was this a steady gig for you at the time?
MC: Well, unlike Tommy and I, Ted wasn't living in New York. So he would fly into New York for a day or so and we would jam, and then he would go back to whatever it was he was doing. We did that over the course of two months. Then Night Ranger broke up. Over the years Jack, Tommy, and Ted had kept in touch. When Jack came in, the band idea just locked in. So, to finally answer your question, there never was an audition for this gig. I came in to play and never left.
RS: Do you feel that you have to go onstage and prove yourself night after night, to more or less validate your membership in Damn Yankees?
MC: To tell you the truth, that never really enters my mind. Because right from the beginning Damn Yankees has been a band made up of friends. Tommy, Jack, and Ted have made my position in the band very comfortable. They've made it very easy to do this gig.
RS: Prior to coming to New York, did you play in any Cleveland bands of note?
MC: After I got out of high school, I did the Midwest club circuit for three or four years in different bands. The first bands were copy bands, but then I progressed to original bands. And then, when I was 22, I moved to New York City.
RS: Are you a schooled drummer?
MC: I took lessons for five years as a kid. For the first two years of those lessons I didn't even have a drumset; I did all my playing on rubber pads. At times it was very frustrating, because learning the rudiments can be tough. But looking back, I couldn't be happier with the way I was taught how to play drums. All through school I was in any kind of band I could join, including orchestra and marching band. After school, I was going through the natural progression of basement and garage bands to bar bands. In high school I was playing three and four nights a week and then sleeping through my first period.
RS: Who were some of the drummers that influenced your style of playing back then?
MC: When I was in my formative years, I was a complete KISS fan, so Peter Criss was a big role model for me. But at the same time I was also a big fan of British progressive rock. While I was listening to and loving albums by KISS, I was practicing to Yes albums. So Bill Bruford and Peter Criss were the guys who first influenced me as a drummer. I was working both that four-on-the-floor straight-out rock 'n' roll feel and that intricate progressive sound into my drum style.
RS: Do you still hear elements of Bruford and Criss in your drum style today?
MC: Every now and then something will come out, and I'll smile to myself and remember where that came from. But I

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Stephen Perkins Of Jane's Addiction

by Matt Peiken

Jane's Addiction doesn't let public perception get in the way of its vision. If the music is somewhat left of conventional hard-rock trappings, so what? A decidedly heavy metal riff will likely be followed by a smorgasbord of jazz, punk, rockabilly, psychedelia, blues, and folk. Of course, it would all be laughable if each of the players couldn't pull it off musically and, somehow, make it all blend.

Drummer Stephen Perkins considers himself lucky. At just 23 years old, he's already found the medium for his varied taste in music. Not many have the freedom to play a Bonham-esque backbeat on one tune, a steel drum on another, and bongos and finger bells on yet another. But then again, Perkins says the band was founded on the concept of no-limits musical freedom. In the waning days of the band's most recent U.S. tour, Perkins discussed how Jane's Addiction maintains musical credibility within its storm of self-propelled controversy.

MP: You're in a rather unique position. Your audience seems to really listen to what Jane's Addiction has to say—more than they listen to your average, mainstream rock band.

SP: I think that may be due to our approach to music. It's not the power ballad—the formula that record companies know they can make money off of. We like to write what we feel and take each song for what it's worth. If we feel like going as fast as we can for a few minutes, we're gonna write a fast punk rock song. And the next day we might want to write a folk tune and have the lyrics really mean something to you.

MP: The songs come across as controlled spontaneity.

SP: That's it. The formula for us is no formula. At our shows, I might signal to the guitar player, "More guitar solo; let's play it." I have a certain cue I do—this hi-hat "scoop"—that means we're going to go back into the verse. I won't do it until I feel that the guitar solo is finished. When I fall into the scoop, we all know to go back.

MP: How can you all catch something as subtle as a hi-hat scoop in a loud arena show?

SP: We play a hundred shows a year or more. You get to know each other. Sometimes it's hard on the road, where all we have is soundchecks and shows. We don't really have much time to jam, so we try to throw the jam into the show. Each night we write the set right before the show, depending on how we feel. If I'm a little tired, we play a slower set; if things are coming off real good, we'll throw a couple more fast ones in. We like to change it nightly. There are one or two songs we always open up with because they're good for the monitor mix and good to warm up our muscles with. Then sometimes in our set, our singer will see a pretty girl and say, "Let's do this song; I want to dedicate it to her." We can throw in any song, because we're fairly well-rehearsed.

Our approach from the beginning has been that a song doesn't have to be letter-perfect for us to play it. We play it for the fun of it. If we're in a good mood, and the shows are sold out every night, and we're playing for kids who are happening, we can do it. If you're not in a good mood, you're not going to pull off a song you haven't rehearsed in three years. But if it's clicking, you remember it.

I tape every show because, as I said, we throw in new things every night. I like to go home and listen to them and see what worked and what didn't. If something worked, I'll use it the next night. If it didn't, I'll never use it again. [laughs] Or I'll try to rehearse it and see if I can *make* it work. And sometimes I'll hear something I don't even remember playing. I bring it back to the guys and say, "Listen to this," and they'll change their guitar parts. So what I did as a mistake a night ago becomes a new part of a song. That's what's cool about playing in a band that doesn't really worry about parts. It's like, "You didn't play it that way last night.. .oh, well."

MP: How did the band come together in the first place?

SP: The guitar player and I were looking for a bass player. We had just gotten out of high school and were playing high-speed punk stuff. My girlfriend's brother was playing bass in a band called Jane's Addiction, and she suggested that we check them out. I couldn't believe what I was hearing! I really got into it. The drummer at the time was playing in a bunch of different bands, and he wasn't 100% into Jane's Addiction. So I tried out the first night, and it clicked. Then I said, "My buddy, this guitar player, is better than your guy. Why don't we bring him in?" That made us a foursome. The bass player and the singer, Perry, have influenced me more than I could ever have imagined. They're older than I am, and their backgrounds are much different than mine.

MP: How do you approach recording in the studio versus playing live?

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don't think there's anything in particular on the Damn Yankees album that I can say, "Oh, this comes from Criss," or "That comes from Bruford." But I do owe one thing to Bill Bruford, in a way. I was a big fan of the band U.K. *[Bruford was U.K.'s original drummer.]* When I was still living in Cleveland, I started corresponding with Eddie Jobson, the violinist/keyboard player in the band. He was also the founding member. On a whim I sent him an audition package: videotape, resume, pictures—the whole deal. He liked what he saw and wrote back. That was really a thrill for me because, at the time, U.K. really was my favorite band. My friends and I would sit around listening to U.K. records and laugh because they were so ridiculously technical and difficult to play. I'd practice to U.K. records the way I would practice to Yes records. Anyway, Eddie and I corresponded for about a year.

Then I went to New York and auditioned for him. He had a record that came out in 1983 called *Zinc*. He didn't go out on the road after it came out, so I didn't know if he was going to continue with the project or not. I found out that he really wanted to, but that he didn't have a band put together. So I went to New York and auditioned, and we just immediately hit it off. His style had influenced the way I played so much that we just locked in together.

The audition went great, but Eddie didn't have anything to offer me at the time. I went back to Cleveland and continued the bar-band thing for about another year. Then in 1985, I moved to New York to start playing with Eddie. For three years we worked on a rehearsing/recording demo project. We became the best of friends, and at some point I'm sure we'll do another project together. Damn Yankees is obviously the main thing in my life, but the *Zinc* project with Eddie is something we both invested a lot of time into.

That's the other side of me as a musician. I love playing that kind of music as much as I do straight-ahead rock 'n' roll. I'm really looking forward to doing another album with Eddie some day.

RS: Is Damn Yankees the kind of band you hoped or figured you'd get your big break with?

MC: Well, I had always hoped that something like this would eventually happen, but I had no idea what my first thing was going to be. When I landed the gig with Tommy Shaw in his back-up band, that felt like a natural progression for me. I really was anticipating doing that for several years before I lucked myself into a band like this. So none of this has been taken for granted. I'm counting my blessings every day, and I'm enjoying this to the fullest. I mean, I couldn't have asked for anything better.

RS: What's it like playing behind Ted Nugent?

MC: I used to go see Ted play when I was in high school. In fact, the big joke when I'm asked how I got in the band is that I went to school with Ted's kids. [laughs] But seriously, I did go see Ted perform a lot when I was in school. I was one of those kids who had his fist in the air. To play with Ted as well as Tommy and Jack means that I get to pretend that I'm in Styx, Night Ranger, and Ted Nugent's band all at once.

RS: Ted Nugent has been saying all along that Damn Yankees is really about playing rock 'n' roll in a live setting because of all its power. Do you agree?

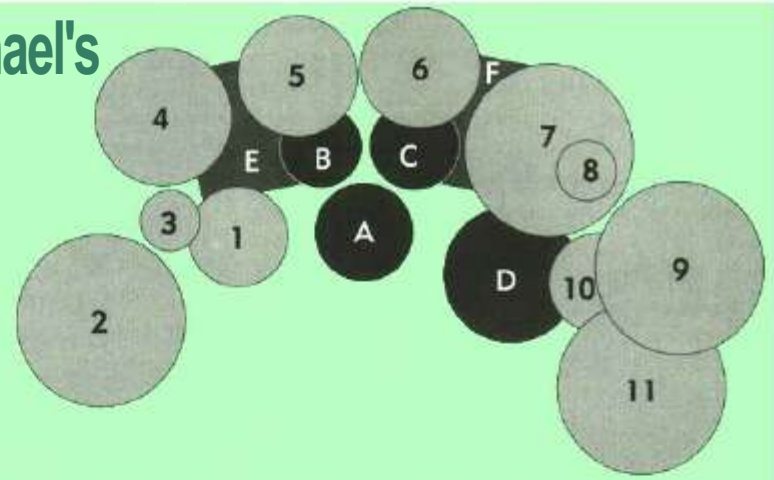
MC: Definitely. During the dates we did last summer with Bad Company, we hit that cruise mode. There's no posing, there's no hair spray. Damn Yankees is the real thing—it's real rock 'n' roll, both on stage and in the studio.

RS: What songs on the Damn Yankees debut have your best playing on them?

MC: I think the song that shows me in my best light is "Coming Of Age"—the first single off the album. I pick that song for two reasons. It's balls-to-the-wall, straight-ahead, groove rock 'n' roll, which is really the undertone of what Damn Yankees is all about. But if you listen real close, you'll hear a lot of inverted beats and weird, syncopated things. Come to think of it, those are all directly related to my British progressive influences. So what I did on that song was show my straight-ahead rock 'n' roll groove aspect *and* my quirky progressive side.

Because that song grooves so well, a lot of people don't realize that the progressive stuff is actually going on until

Michael's Kit



Drumset: Pearl MLX series in black finish
A. 6 1/2 x 14 snare (carbon fiber)
B. 10x10 tom
C. 10 x 12 tom
D. 16x18 floor tom
E. 16 x 22 bass drum
F. 16x22 bass drum

Cymbals: Zildjian Platinum
1. 14" Rock hi-hats
2. 19" Rock crash
3. 8" EFX cymbals (two mounted hi-hat style)
4. 18" Rock crash
5. 16" Rock crash
6. 16" Rock crash
7. 20" Rock ride
8. 8" LP *Icebell*
9. 20" China Boy low
10. 14" Rock hi-hats (closed)
11. 19" Rock crash

Hardware: All Pearl, including two P950 Super *Pro* chain drive pedals
Heads: Remo Ebony *Pinstripes* all the way around, with Ebony *Ambassadors* on bottoms of toms
Sticks: Pro-Mark 2B wood tip, natural finish
Gloves: Beato fingerless type

they see the band play live. Then they say, "What the hell was that?"

RS: Do any other songs on the album stand out in terms of your drumming?

MC: The title song has a real nice kind of swing thing with weird, anticipated bass-drum stuff. "Piledriver" is that speed-metal mania thing, which is new to me. I just started playing double bass when Damn Yankees formed. I'm still figuring out what I should be doing back there behind them.

RS: When Damn Yankees went into the recording studio to make its album, how much freedom were you given to incorporate your ideas into the songs?

MC: We did the album with producer Ron Nevison. When we first met Ron, I was prepared to take everything that I'd been playing in rehearsals and cut it in half. I started to do that when Ron first came to hear the band, and he said, "No man, keep doing what you were doing." I think every musician knows when things are appropriate and when things are for yourself. There were times when I'd do a little too much, or not enough. But Ron and the band were very supportive of what I was doing. I never felt like I was being told, "No, don't do that."

RS: Needless to say, your first major recording experience was a good one.

MC: Oh yeah. We were getting two basic tracks a day; we ended up finishing them in a little over a week. I was just really excited. Nevison looked over at me and said, "Wow man, I can't believe you're done already." I said, "Let's do some more! Let's do the next album right now!" [laughs]

I know I keep going back to this, but the way we recorded this album was the way we are on stage, which is kind of—and I'll use Ted's term—"reckless abandon." We were in a controlled setting in the recording studio, but all the while we were laughing and just having lots of fun. For that reason, there was never any of that, "Oh boy, I better get it on this take." It was never like that at all. I couldn't be happier that this is the first big record I've played on. The way I sound on the record is the way I think I *should* sound.

STEPHEN PERKINS

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SP: When you're making a record, you want to arrange things. We record our songs the same way we rehearse them. But in a live situation, Perry has the freedom to just react to something at the time and go off in his own little world. He doesn't even have to sing the right verse at the right times, as long as the band's completely tight.

MP: Is it difficult then to restrain yourselves in the studio?

SP: It is difficult when you're wearing headphones and looking through a piece of glass. It's hard to get the same feeling across as you do when you're jamming and sweating and your best friend's out there screaming.

We all play at the same time when we're recording, because that's the only way I can do it. It involves timing—and it's more than just keeping the same tempo the whole time. When you're going to a guitar solo, you *want* to speed up a little; it's just natural. If Perry says something real heavy, I want to accent it, and if the music speeds up just a little, that's natural too. If I play to a click, Jane's Addiction doesn't sound right. We like to play off each other, so we all play together and keep what sounds best. Sometimes we keep everything, but usually it's just bass and drums.

MP: Did you do anything different—drumming-wise—in approaching *Ritual de lo Habitual* than you did for *Nothing's Shocking*?

SP: I definitely thought more about being steady. It's a record, so you have to be solid. You don't have to stay *away* from the crazy licks, but if you throw them in, you have to make sure they're tasteful—because if they're not, you have to live with it forever.

I go into the studio kind of cautious, anyway. I go in earlier in the day, without anybody else there, and record the song by myself with the engineer—just to try different things. If the song has a lot of snare in it, I'll try a piccolo with it; if a tom fill's not working, I'll tune them differently. Or maybe the cymbals might sound too big or too small. Parts that work live, through big speakers, might not work on tape.

MP: That's a very different approach than the spontaneity you usually like to

"Can't we skip all this rudiment and reading stuff and get right to some RUSH? Here I brought a tape."

have.

SP: When we're recording, we want to make sure everything is heard correctly. We play a *lot* of notes. There's a lot of beats, a lot of guitar, and it's very hard to pick it apart on tape. Sometimes the song comes out a lot differently than we originally thought it would. In that case, we might go in and do it over, or we might like the whole thing, or we might keep parts of it and pull one bass note out and give the part a little more air. Sometimes a couple more snare notes might give it the bounce we're looking for.

MP: *Ritual de lo Habitual* sounds a lot more percussive than *Nothing's Shocking*.

SP: It's more of a total approach than "playing drums to the song." I want to play *rhythms* to the song, like the tribal tom thing I do on "Ain't No Right." The funny thing is, though, we wrote all the songs for both records at the same time.

MP: The songs on the second side of *Ritual* are noticeably slower than those on the first side. How do the slower tunes go over with live audiences?

SP: They get into them. Maybe they act a little less radical than they do during the jammin' ones. Sometimes I listen to a live tape and everything might sound a little out of control, because we don't mind when people run up on stage. That adds to the excitement of the show, as long as they don't start pulling some of the cymbals off of the stands! You lose concentration sometimes, which can take away from the tightness of the band. But sometimes the crowd's not as wild, and you can play a real technically sound show. We played at this place in Germany that was all seats, and everybody just sat there. So I just closed my eyes and got into the groove, and it was one of the best sets we've ever had. But I like the kids running on the stage, too, because it makes for a great show.

MP: You're a lot different from most rock bands. People either really dig you or they just can't figure you out.

SP: When I was growing up and I first heard bands like Talking Heads or David Bowie, I hated them. I thought, "What are they doing? I don't get it!" But after a while, I said, "This is brilliant." You can hear a Bon Jovi song and grasp it immediately. Whether you like it or not, you'll remember it. But Jane's Addiciton is an acquired taste.

I like to listen to all kinds of influences. As a kid, I had the Who in one ear and Led Zeppelin in the other and tried to play drums to it. Those are great mentors for rock drumming, but I listen to a lot of swing. I can't play *and* listen to rock all the time. I like to jam with Latin groups and come up with some strange fusion stuff. I know a lot of different musicians near my house, and I like to just pick up a pair of bongos and have someone else play the kit for a while.

There are a lot of percussion jams I do, too, and I take whatever I do that night and try to bring it to the kit. Why play a rock 'n' roll beat for a rock 'n' roll band? I mean, we're stuck with the bass, guitar, drums, vocals—that's been a rock 'n' roll cliche for years—so we're trying to do something different with it.

We actually thought about bringing a violin player on tour with us, but we didn't want just a person on salary. We want someone who fits us—to be a regular member of the band. We haven't found the right person yet, but it's still in the works. It just falls in line with our philosophy that if we want to do it, we will. And this would make it possible to pull off some things live, like "Of Course."

MP: How was that song born? It has kind of a Turkish or Middle Eastern feel, along with the violin part at the intro.

SP: We wrote that on tour in the snow, in a Winnebago. It has this "boom-chick-chick, boom-chick-chick" sound, and all I had were these spoons and a piece of wood. When we got into the studio, I sampled my talking drum—"boing"—and used that sound on a kick drum. I played other samples—timpani, bells, and chimes—and went in and did finger bells live. I did drum tracks for that song for weeks! What I want to do live is have a drum machine do the "boing-chick-chick" through the P.A. and have me stand up front and play the percussion sounds on pads along with it.

MP: What's the best thing about playing with Jane's Addiciton for you?

SP: I get to play what I want and groove when I want. I've played demos for other bands, and some guy will say, "Can you play a beat like so-and-so," and I'll be thinking, "Why can't we just play a new beat?" With Jane's Addiciton, if we've heard it before, we *don't* play it. It may be a great groove, but why play it if somebody else did? Pull some notes from it, maybe, or don't even go near it. We all give each other pointers, or maybe try something syncopated in a certain spot. But we always want to do something different.

MP: It must have been hard to live up to that philosophy and create your own identity, coming out of LA.

SP: Unfortunately, there *is* a typical LA sound now, even though it's such a melting pot that there shouldn't be a typical *anything*. The looks of the bands had a lot to do with it, but even the sound just *sat* there—in this 2-and-4 thing. We draw from all the influences around us. In LA. we've got the beach, the mountains, Mexico, the sea, shootings.... But we were never really into the LA. scene. We were doing this underground thing, playing these strange clubs. We were starting another scene, and I think we're one of the torchbearers of something new. The alternative thing is kind of happening now, with us, the Chili Peppers, and Faith No More. I'm proud to be part of that.

MP: What's in your future?

SP: After we get off the road, we're going to take a long hiatus. We've made great music, and I'm sure there's a lot more inside us. But Jane's Addiction could end tomorrow, and I'd be on the kit the next day. I just love good music, and, no matter what happens, I'll be playing some kind of music I like—somewhere.

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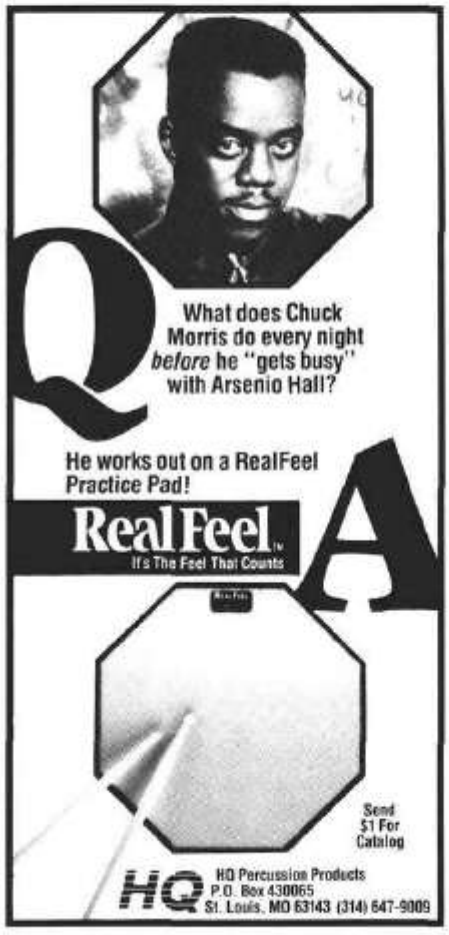
teristic of the drum *is* the drum—that's my philosophy. If you work towards a certain style and attack, then you're on the right course. I said to Beals, 'Let's make up a snare drum head and not leave it up to the customer to muffle it. Let's try to come up with a head that has a muffler in it. We'll set a standard so that 90% of the people buying it would feel the drum was muffled enough for them by the head itself.'

"That was the first *Genera* head. It came down to films. We used a very lightweight internal ring inside. It took a lot of experimenting to get the right thickness and have it not adhere to the head. It floats on the head and comes up against it as you tighten it down. Then I thought about the customers who use a lot of muffling because they won't play a drum unless it goes 'thunk.' I wanted to make a head as bright as the standard *Genera,* but any more muffling would dull the attack of the drum. You primarily lose rimshots. The more muffling, the duller the rimshot, until it almost doesn't sound like a rimshot anymore. It's important to preserve that, because we use that sound so much."

Surprisingly, the answer was in a series of small holes placed strategically on the head. "The idea just came to me," he says. "My first visualization was of a trampoline. In my mind, I saw a trampoline suspended on rings and thought we could do this by defeating the edge of the head. We had to somehow keep the head from vibrating. I looked at the modes of vibration in my musical acoustic books and thought that by adding holes to the head in certain places, the head might stop vibrating. So that's how it started. It's funny—in doing patent searches, I can't believe no one has come up with this before.

"After a lot of research, I found the positioning for the holes and the size. That became the *Genera Dry,* which has been very popular. We've expanded the line with the two-ply *Genera HD,* for people who go right through a single-ply head. In making this head, we went for a good feel and enhanced attack characteristics. This should prove to be our most popular head."



Another true innovation has been the *Genera* series of bass drum heads. These sets feature special front and back heads paired together for an optimum bass drum sound without the need for pillows and excess muffling. "I wanted to apply the same philosophy: let's put rings inside. We started putting this *E-ring* inside, which just came up against the head to control the feel and shut off certain modes of vibration close to the edge. The holes again helped diminish the vibrations without making it dead. With the front head, I had to keep it vibrating, so we came up with this grill where you put a mic' up to it. The idea was to take the stuff out of the bass drum and get back to using it like a bass drum. If we can establish this sound, maybe it will make people in the drum industry take notice and start making great bass drums again. I see guys buying $1,200 Yamaha *Recording Custom* bass drums at my store and putting all that stuff inside, and it's like, why? This 'stuffing' makes all the bass drums sound the same.

"I may be wrong, but this is an observation I've made: Modern bass drum technique has evolved out of the fact that putting muffling in the bass drum has made it so hard to hear it in the structure of the drumset. Psychologically we've begun to play into it to make it sound more pointed, because it gets buried in the toms and the music. With a pillow inside, there's no feedback to you. It's like playing a Simmons pad. If you don't have a good monitor, you end up playing harder into it. You don't really get any more volume, but psychologically you do it anyway. I think that's why this technique of playing into the drum has evolved. Theoretically, that's the wrong way to hit the drum. Look at any of the old-school players like Buddy Rich and Gene Krupa, or players like Jack DeJohnette and Chester Thompson—they hit the drum and make it sound like this [hits two sticks together with a glancing blow]. You don't play a drum like this [hits two sticks into each other, keeping them together] to make it sound. Talk to timpanists like Vic Firth; if you want to get a good sound, play off the drum. Now that these heads let the drums breathe, speak, and work as an instrument, that technique has become more important to embrace."

While many drummers like the more open sound, Bob has found it difficult for them to change their technique. "The biggest hassle," he says, "is with players who have been playing into the drum for a decade. Some of them can't adjust. I tell my customers to try the heads for two weeks, don't use anything else, and you'll be playing off the drum. I can't guarantee that, but it will just evolve without practice, if you give it a chance.

"What I tried to do with the double-ply *EQ2* and *EQ3* is fill two niches that have been a problem for some drummers. As good as a single-ply head sounds, some drummers won't put it on their drums. So we needed a more durable double-ply head to take care of these players. The main idea here was a drumhead with more punch and strength for rock and funk players. While the *EQ2* is designed for external miking, there's a pre-cut mic' hole in the *EQ3* front head. The rear head has a new patent-pending muffler that moves with it. It's more like

a gate than a pillow, letting the drum sound natural. The muffler is on velcro, so you can change it for a custom design."

A benefit of the *Genera* heads is being able to put them on and have a great sound immediately, without having to experiment with muffling or tape. "That's been part of the inspiration behind the heads," relates Gatzen. "I see so many atrocities in my store. Guys say they can't get their snare to sound good—and they've got the snares on upside down! It's unbelievable; you can't always leave it up to drummers, because they're not drum techs. Even at the highest level, many very good drummers do not know how to tune. So it's nice to take something out of the box, put it on, and have it sound close to where you want it with a minimum of attention. Drummers really shouldn't spend all their time trying to get a good sound. Guys like me are the ones who should do that stuff."

Drummers are becoming more concerned with their sound now, with drums becoming musical again and thought of as an instrument. "I love it," states Bob enthusiastically. "I've always played that way—very open, pure, and organic. But I'm not saying it's the only way. I heard Dave Weckl's album, *Masterplan,* and he does the title track with Steve Gadd. I was listening and thought how amazing it is that their drum sound has become a standard in the industry. But as others copied it, it became overused and less effective. Okay, sound is sound, and there's no good or bad, but I think it's time for something else to happen. If you listen to pop and rock today, most of the players are headed towards a live, ambient style of drums. I think it's a good direction for a change. I like the idea that things are moving in another direction."

Recently Bob became involved with Tough Traveler, designing their new *Drumslinger* bags. "That turned out to be something more than I thought it was," Bob says. "I had carried their bags in my store and thought I could come up with some better designs. This cordura material is great stuff, but these bags had nothing to do with drummers. Things were in the wrong places. Each new bag has unique features, things that I've looked for as a drummer. I started with a cymbal bag with graduated slots so that the bells would line up and the cymbals would be protected. The stick bag is designed to fit in the cymbal bag. The snare bag has a zippered pocket for extra heads. No big deal, but no one else seemed to have done it before. There's a new back-pack bass drum bag that can be carried in a variety of ways, and there's the *Quick-Stick,* which is a holster for carrying two or three sticks. This works out well for the guy who wants to sit in at a jam session, or doesn't want 40 pairs of sticks hanging on his drumset."

Bob also speaks of a new Noble & Cooley drumstick line that is being put out by Calato. "There are four models: light to extra-heavy. They progress in size from one to another in a very subtle way. The structure is similar, but it changes in small increments to maintain feel, while increasing size. Every stick is designed to be well-balanced itself, but to progress from one to the other. A drummer can change sticks, even from tune to tune, and have them feel familiar."

The innovative products that Bob has come up with have given him a well-deserved reputation as a designer. But working with these companies is more than just designing products and hoping for the best. He stresses the importance of having a good relationship with any company he works with. "I love to work with these small companies. I'm a real team player, and we can do things that other companies can't because of this relationship. I call for a prototype and—boom—it's here. I test it, send it back, and then it's returned to me. So we've been able to keep a fairly steep development curve over the past few years because of the great teamwork. Also, I don't have to deal with committee decisions that slow everything down. This is a unique position in the industry because my track record has been pretty good, without too many bombs.

"When I start working for a company, I feel that I'm part owner. When I talk to Bob Beals or Jay Jones, it's like, 'How are we doing? What are our products doing?' It's not an employer/employee relationship at all. I want to see it happen; it's the only way working on these designs will make sense. Ideas are cheap. Bringing it successfully to the marketplace, getting into the ditches and doing it—that's hard. Fortunately I have good relationships with these companies—they rely on me to come up with this stuff, and I'm a dedicated person."

Another important aspect of Bob's busy life is his home 24-track studio. Besides using it as a lab for sound modeling and design, he and bassist Bob Wallace have produced a series of demos for his recording project, Red Eyes. These tapes have received a very positive response from various record companies. But as Bob has learned, there are many hidden details in trying to get a recording contract. "I put out a master tape last year," he explains, "and it's been doing pretty good. Vibes player Dave Samuels, who's a good friend of mine, is on it. I have a complete album project ready to record, but I'm only doing four tunes this time. The mistake I made in the past was taking too much time to put the project

together.

"This is not pop music, it's cross-over jazz/fusion. As an unknown musician, I'm trying to come up in the instrumental world, which is a difficult place to sell anything. While it's aimed at the new age window, I wouldn't call it 'new age.' I thought that if I could finish a master tape and sell it to a small label, it would be easier, sort of a lower-budget project. Actually it turned out to be a stumbling block. Oddly enough, the small labels didn't seem that interested, while the big labels were more responsive.

"I'm finding out that record companies don't give you money for a project and just let you run away with it. They give you money, and you have to give a lot of it back. They say, 'Okay, here's your $40,000 for this project, but we'd like you to record it in this studio because it's a sound we get.' So there's $17,000 gone. Then they say, 'We have this producer who's done our last three albums.' That's 30% more, and suddenly you're left with $8,000 to divide among the musicians. That's pretty much the way it's been going. So I decided to do just four tunes as a demo and try to draw the industry with it. They're going to be mastered, but I'll re-record them if I have to. But I'm not going to do a whole project and go through this again."

With the heavy percussion and mallet emphasis, the early demos can be compared closest to the band Wishful Thinking. Bob relates that the new project has evolved and changed since then. "Dave Samuels had the idea to use two vibes players. We hooked up with a former student of mine named Steve Shapiro. He's been working in New York doing jingles, and he's real steeped in MIDI. He's a great young guy who's been doing some unique things with the Lang MIDI system, so we started passing around music and recording here at my studio.

"Dave is doing his third album for GRP records out in California, and then will be coming here to play on this as well. I'm also using a New York guitarist named Jeff Pevar. He's worked with Joe Cocker and Rickie Lee Jones and is a great cross-over player. So we want to get this together and see if we can sell it.

"The music itself is different than the previous projects; it's more rhythm-oriented. I'm really looking for something more accessible. Some of it sounds like [South African musician] Johnny Clegg, with a lot of rhythm parts going on. And some is almost like Dixieland, with melodies interweaving between three players. It's a more rhythmic groove approach. I'm excited about the music because it's different for me. I've never written stuff quite like this. I'm not the only one writing, though; everyone is contributing."

If Red Eyes is anything like his design projects, then Bob is sure to succeed in the record industry. As if to tie all his work together, he expresses a final thought on his own drums. "I'm really aiming for a world-class drum sound on this recording," he states. "I've been working with various microphones and miking techniques in the studio. I feel that if *I* don't get a good drum sound, I'll really be in trouble!"

Om Percussion

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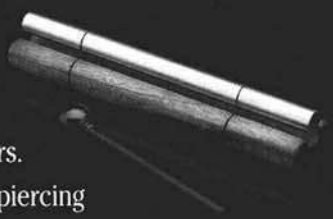

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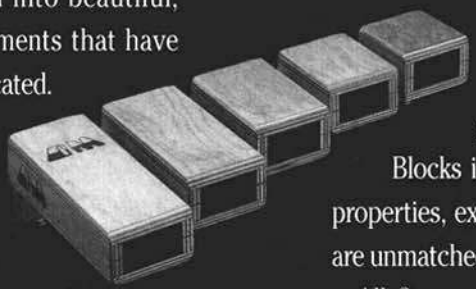

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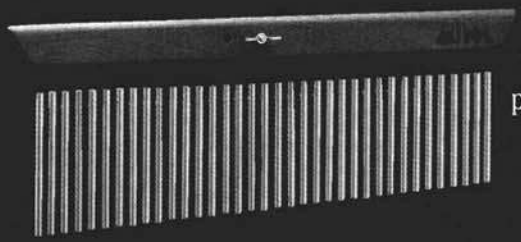

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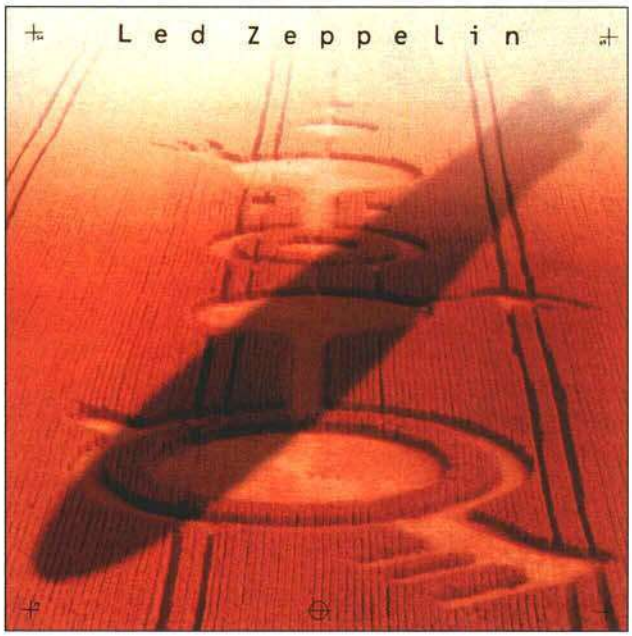
RECORDINGS



LED ZEPPELIN

The Led Zeppelin Collection
Atlantic 7 82144-2.
JOHN BONHAM: dr, perc
R. PLANTS vcl
J. PAGE: gtr
J.R JONES: bs, kybd
54 songs on four compact discs, four cassettes, or six records, digitally remastered from Led *Zeppelin, Led Zeppelin II, Led Zeppelin III,* untitled fourth album, Houses Of The *Holy, Physical Graffiti, Presence, The* Song *Remains The* Same, *In Through The Out Door,* and Coda (plus three tracks previously unavailable on album).

John Bonham stamped an indelible impression on rock drumming in the 1970s with his combination of power and finesse. Long after his death in late 1979, few of today's household names in rock drumming don't credit Bonzo for at least some degree of influence. This boxed set gives an aural perspective of the band (and of Bonzo's drumming) never before available.

Digital technology brings more punch and volume to Bonham's bass work and enhances the clarity of his cymbals. Now it's easier to hear how Bonham drove "I Can't Quit You Baby" with single-bass 8th-note triplets. And you can really hear the subtlety of his hi-hat groove and syncopation with John Paul Jones on "In My Time Of Dying."

This package also makes it easier to analyze how Bonham's drum sound and overall style evolved. The loose, slightly tinny snare on the first record (1969) clearly becomes more crisp and fat by *Houses Of The Holy* (1973). And you can hear how by *Presence* (1976), Bonham accented more often with the hi-hat to create short bursts of impact and suspense.

Of course, some things about Bonham never changed. He had a deliberate propensity to play as far behind the beat as possible, lending a heaviness to every groove, and the tone from his cymbal crashes seemed to go on forever!

Whether you're well-schooled in Bonham's work, a curious old-timer, or a young drummer new to the rock fold, this compilation will bring new life and an interesting view to Bonzo's legendary work.

•Matt Peiken

RALPH PETERSON

Presents The Fo'tet
Blue Note 7 95475 2
RALPH PETERSON: dr
B. CARROTT vbs
D. BYRON: dr, bs clr
M. SLOCUM: bs
Urban Omen; Thabo; Homecoming; Axis Mundi; Ballad For Queen Tiye; Miss Lady; I Can Dream, Can't I?; Confrontation; Johnny Come Lately.

Ralph Peterson is an aggressive, spontaneous drummer spawned from the influences of tidal force warriors such as Blakey, Elvin, and Tony Williams. On his three previous Blue Note discs as a leader, Peterson proved himself a master neo-hard bop skinsman, a skillful composer, and a leader with a flair for inciting passion into his hungry, hard-edged quintet and trio. The Fo'tet is a new "fo'"-man unit that highlights yet another side of the versatile leader's talents. Their music features a more post-bop, left-of-mainstream approach.

The combination of vibes, clarinet, bass, and drums poses new challenges. Although the texture is naturally lighter than in Peterson's traditional quintet, the intensity remains. Reedman Don Byron and four-mallet vibist Bryan Carrott deserve special praise for their contributions. There haven't been so many surprising angular twists and turns in a vibes/clarinet coupling since Eric Dolphy and Bobby Hutcherson.

Peterson's muscular, hard-swinging kit work is even more exposed in this group, and his dynamic control is even more crucial. The gamble pays off, showing his ability to determine the crests and rolls of ensemble intensity and sensitivity. Somehow he thunders without bulldozing the others.

In recent trends, many young hard bop revivalists have been content to produce discs sounding like polite imitative remakes of old Blakey discs, all to much media applause. Peterson's leadership, however, has managed to impress a stamp of contemporary personality and originality within each of his groups. With each new disc this drummer proves that he is an important new keeper of the flame.

•Jeff Potter

KAMIKAZE GROUND CREW

The Scenic Route
New World/CounterCurrents NW 400-4
DANNY FRANKEL: dr, perc
R APFELBAUM: tn sx, cl-sx, cl, rec
S. BERNSTEIN: trp, pic trp, cor, fig, tb
J. CRESSMAN: tbn, bar hn, si. whistle
B. LIPTON: tb
G. LEISHMAN: al sx, bs cl, acdn, uk, kybd, vcl

D. WIESELMAN: sx, cl, gtr, mandolin, uk, penny whistle

Duke's Entrance; Al Tattooed And Cynthia Green; Funeral Oration; Chorales For America: Chorale, Canon, Subterranean, Birds & Bottles, Walkabout; The Mystery Song; House Rockas (Bobby Woodruff & The); Tango; Diamonds Are Just Glass; Follow The Ducks; The Milkmaid; Brass Trio; March Of The Floaties; Fred And Rick; Funeral Procession

ROBIN HOLCOMB

Robin Holcomb

Elektra Musician 9 60983-2

DANNY FRANKEL: dr, perc
R. HOLCOMB: pn, vcl
D. WIESELMAN: cl, tn sx, gtr
D. HOFSTRA: bs, tb
J CAULFIELD: vln, mandolin
W. HORVITZ: kybd, harmonica
B. FRISELL: gtr
NICA: vcl

Nine Lives; The American Rhine; Electrical Storm; Troy; So Straight And Slow; Hand Me Down All Stories; this poem is in memory of!; Yr Mother Called Them Farmhouses; Waltz; Deliver Me

You're strolling down Bourbon Street, when suddenly you realize it's the Champs Elysees, or is it Checkpoint Charlie? You see your old friend Maurice Ravel coming toward you, but as you extend your hand he melts into Duke Ellington, or—wait—Kurt Weill? Yes, this is the land of tangerine trees and marmalade skies, and as you climb into your newspaper taxi, you recognize the music on the radio as that of the Kamikaze Ground Crew, the circus band for the Flying Karamazov Brothers. In this land, Stravinsky plays chess with Herbie Hancock, and the Art Ensemble of Chicago recites Beckett. As Henry the Horse waltzes by your window, you think, "These Kamikazes are well-grounded in this particular territory, leaving conventional jazz improvisation to specialists."

Your restless driver turns the radio dial, and now the sound is firmly American, echoing Bonnie Raitt, Jim Morrison, and Thelonious Monk. Even Bill Frisell's swooping guitar has been brought down to earth. As you step onto the curb, your plasticine porter identifies the album by modernist singer/songwriter Robin Holcomb, whose plaintive voice is gently embraced by diverse instrumental and stylistic settings.

At the heart of all this warmly intelligent music is the loose, witty drumming of Danny Frankel. His style recalls colorists such as Joey Baron, Bobby Previte, or Paul Motian, and he is similarly versatile enough to lay down the beat for Holcomb and reserve the impressionism for the Crew, where brief solos can reflect his sense of dynamics and surprise. Danny's earthy tone is nicely accommodated to both projects. Good listening for kids of all ages.

• Harold Howland

BOCLE BROTHERS

GOING PLACES

DOLORES 25017-2

MARCELLO PELLITTERI: dr
JEAN BAPTISTE BOCLE: vbs, mrm, kybd
G. BOCLE: bs
D. McCASLIN: tn sx
J. ABERCROMBIE: gtr

Game Over; Me Voy Pa'Margarita; Wherever You Go; Try Again; Cactus; Andrea; Slight Changes; Night Time; Going Places.

Gary Burton names Jean Baptiste Bocle as his "favorite new vibist" in the liner notes accompanying this young talent's debut as a leader. That's a heavy expectation to live up to, but with this release Bocle should make his former teacher Burton plenty proud. Bocle is a four-mallet modern jazzman with an approach very much spun from the Burton school. But Bocle has a lot to offer of his own, especially in his rhythmic soloing style.

The band, co-led with equally talented bassist brother Gildas, features four impressive young players who bring a passion to the Bocles' skillfully crafted compositions, two of which are composed by Gildas, and the rest by Jean Baptiste. Guest artist John Abercrombie adds richness through his enhancement of the vibes lines and also contributes some mean solos. Drummer Pellitteri also deserves praise for his fine kit work.

The quartet has been touring France in support of this disc, and they're hoping to break into the U.S. circuit. This independent, small-label release gives them a promising start in the right direction.

•Jeff Potter

KING'S X

FAITH HOPE LOVE

MEGAFORCE/ATLANTIC 7821245-2

JERRY GASKILL: vcl, dr, perc
T. TABOR: vcl, gtr
D. PINNICK: vcl, bs

We Are Finding Who We Are; It's Love; I'll Never Get Tired Of You; Fine Art Of Friendship; Mr. Wilson; Moanjam; Six Broken Soldiers; I Can't Help It; Talk To You; Everywhere I Go; We Were Born To Be Loved; Faith Hope Love ;Legal Kill

If there's anything heavy about King's X, it's the overall effect the band leaves listeners. Nothing about this band or this album (the band's third) shares the in-your-face stereotype attached to other bands tossed into the same hard rock/metal category.

Sure, *Faith Hope Love* may fall more in line with metal than with easy listening, but nary a more beautiful record have I heard in quite a while—in any genre.

As atypical are the songs of King's X, so is Gaskill's drumming. From serene ballad to bluesy jam, Gaskill gives his bandmates a very percussive background to build on. He deliberately plays behind the beat throughout, but never lags, locking into Pinnick's bass lines to create the tight rhythms that have become a King's X trademark.

Press rolls and brief marching-style patterns and flams lend regimented feels to "We Are finding Who We Are" and "Tired Of You." Gaskill and Pinnick display their syncopation on "I Can't Help It" and "Mr. Wilson." And Gaskill lays into the straight-ahead rocker "Moanjam" and shows off technical prowess on "Talk To You" and the funky "We Were Born To Be Loved."

Gaskill isn't your typical metal drummer, but King's X isn't your typical metal band. And without a label or its limitations to wear, Gaskill is the better for it.

•Matt Peiken

STEVE SHEHAN

Arrows

Made To Measure MTM 26

STEVE SHEHAN: all instruments

Arrows; Sticks And Spices; Shogun; Rainy Forest; Afrocubana; Istanblue; Unknown Lights; Blue Nile

An ambitious one-man effort, *Arrows* is a soundscape piece featuring layered percussion, sampled sounds, and "ambient atmospheres," or tapes recorded around the globe (mostly in Asia and Africa). The composer/percussionist's world travels inspired each of these eight selections, which reflect various exotic environments.

Shehan's strong sense for the possibilities of percussion colors through layering, and his talent for "composing" through skillful tape mixing and editing, make the texturally shifting pieces flowing, coherent, and interesting. And his tasteful use of samples serves to enhance the flow rather than impress with gimmickry. Although the percussion parts employ plenty of rhythm, the resulting focus remains color and texture. Even melodic/harmonic instruments such as piano are used primarily for percussive purposes. More than just a rambling "background" ambient piece, *Arrows* offers surprising contrasts and an imaginative use of the percussion vocabulary.

•Jeff Potter

VIDEO

TIME GROOVE

Featuring:

ALEX ACUNA, LOUIE BELLSON, VIC FIRTH, STEVE GADD, HARVEY MASON, DAVE SAMUELS

Video Artists International
P.O. Box 153
Ansonia Station
New York, NY 10023

Time: 72 minutes

Price: $29.95

(VHS and Beta)

Time Groove is such a pleasure to watch and listen to—just having all these great players in one room is remarkable. The music played by the ensemble was composed by Harold Farberman, who also conducts the group, and it's a perfect vehicle for these players to show their stuff.

The video is broken into three sections. The first, "Ground Zero Paradiddle," is based on the ensemble employing this rudiment in various contexts. Good playing and sensitivity highlight the section.

The next section is "The Dancers Suite," which is broken into six parts. On the first, "Gadd's Tri-Tone Gazebo," we get a chance to see Steve grooving and using the drum vocabulary that he helped create. Alex Acuna and Harvey Mason get to show off their stuff on "Mix & Match," Dave Samuels plays a great vibes solo on "Dave's Lookin' Fine," Louie Bellson does some nifty tap dancing on "Louie's Click Steps," and Vic Firth gets his chance to hoof over RotoToms and timpani on "Vic's Wood Stick," which was inspired by tap dancer Peg Leg Bates. Finally, "Laser Heat" features Gadd and Bellson sharing the spotlight. On this one, a split screen allows us to watch both players at the same time.

The last piece, "The Princess," is a performance/animation fairy tale narrated and sung by Thea Mann. Various percussion instruments are used to highlight the plot, which is a fun way of combining all these elements.

Time Groove features great production quality, though it would have been nice to get conductor Farberman in more shots, as well as closer looks at the players' feet while they were playing. But throughout the video, all the players exhibit great chops, musicality, and diversity. A definite must-see—again and again and again. (The music from the video is available on a rental basis from Cortelu Music Publishers.)

•Gary Spellissey

BOOKS

STEVE GADD UP CLOSE

by Steve Gadd and Bobby Cleall

Manhattan Music Publications
Video Transcription Series
541 Ave. of the Americas
New York, NY 10011

Price: $19.95

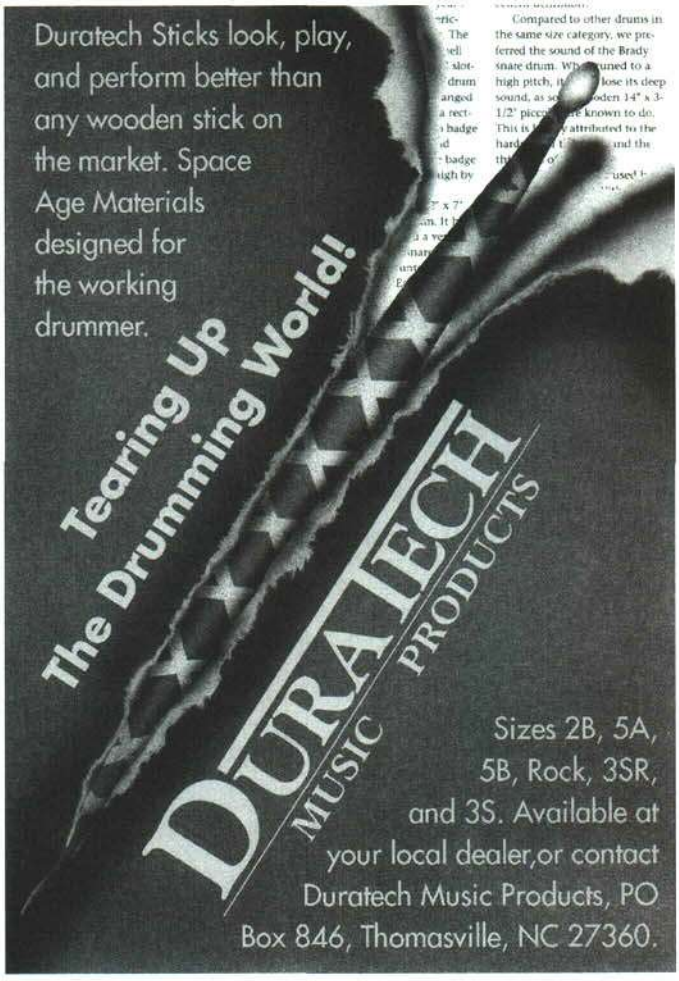
Have you ever watched a drum video twice from beginning to end and still not been able to figure out what's going on? Manhattan Music (a division of DCI) now offers one fine solution in the form of *Steve Gadd Up Close,* Steve's "first authorized book." This book includes all the important drumming highlights from the video production of the same name. Better yet, it's

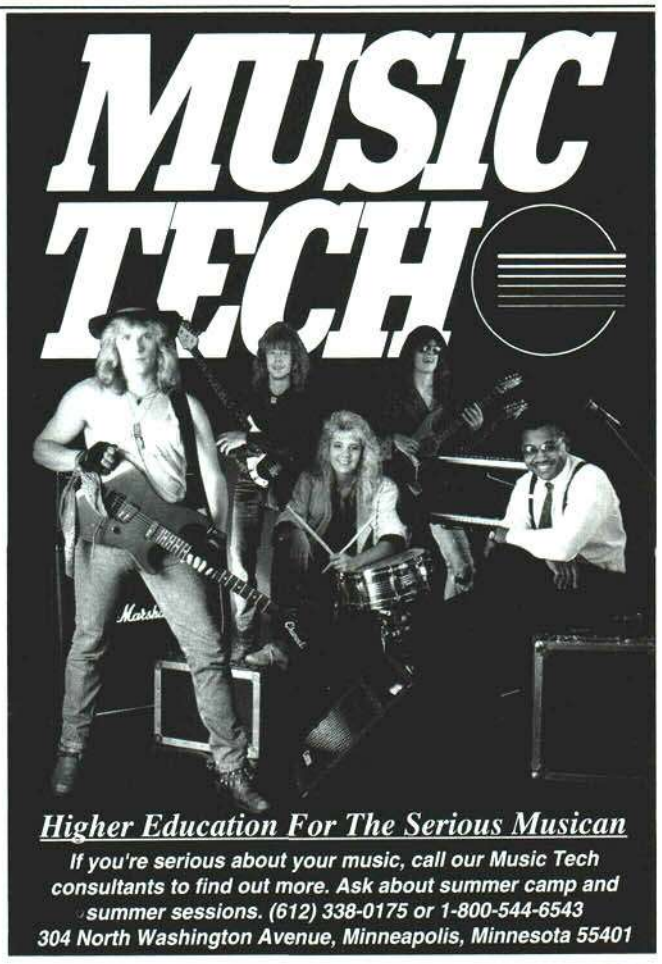
all neatly and accurately transcribed, with an excellent accompanying audio tape that enables you to follow along with the proceedings. Disciples of Gadd will have a field day dissecting the author's rhythmic nuances, phrasings, orchestrations, and all those other subtleties that seem to fly by on the video.

Like the original video, the book is an insightful, revealing glimpse of Gadd's inventive use of rudiments, along with his unique approach to shuffles, independence, slow grooves, studio playing, chart reading, and samba grooves. You'll also find the infamous licks from "SO Ways" and "Late In The Evening," plus a meticulous transcription of Gadd's challenging solo taken right off the video. Two selections ("Variations On Crazy Army" and "The Solo") are even reproduced in a separate, fold-out format so that you can lay it out across a music stand and dig in to your heart's content. Nice touch.

From the packaging to the graphics, this is a classy production, very much in line with what we've come to expect from DCI. The price tag's a bit steep, but if you consider how few Gadd projects are actually out there, it's a worthwhile investment. *Steve Gadd Up Close* is a rare opportunity to get beneath the surface of this truly influential player. If the video left your head spinning, spend some time with this follow-up, and you may find it'll all make sense.

•Mark Hurley





Why Is The Music Business So Tough?

by Roy Burns

I've received a number of letters from aspiring young drummers who are frustrated with the difficulties of making it in today's music business. These young drummers are, for the most part, hard-working and willing to make sacrifices to succeed. But they're unsure as to how to proceed.

Let's examine the problems that all musicians face in today's professional environment. First of all, there are more drummers than ever before—but fewer places in which to play and gain experience. In Los Angeles, there are so many groups looking for opportunities that bands very often play for nothing. This is called "showcasing," because the hope is that a manager or record company representative will hear the band and give them a chance. Less fortunate groups are often asked to "pay to play" by selling tickets to all of their friends. The group has to buy the tickets from the club. If they are unable to sell all of the tickets, the group loses money.

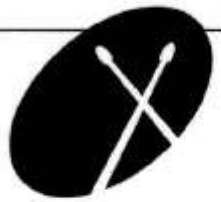
No doubt, we are in a competitive business, but those who are undaunted by the odds may still want to give it a go. Once you've made that decision, you should prepare for success in every way that you can. Play, study, listen, work, watch, and practice, because it is always best to try to be ready for any opportunity.

Young women have an even tougher time as drummers, because a lot of men won't give them a chance—or refuse to take them seriously. Although I think this has been changing for the better in recent years, it's happening very slowly.

Musicians want to be paid a great deal of money—to do what *they* want to do. In most other jobs, the boss not only tells you what to do, but how to do it. This is tough for creative people who deeply want to express their personal feelings and point of view. If you expect to be paid to play what *you* want to play, you will have to be *very* good indeed.

Not everyone has the talent to be a superstar—or even a working professional drummer. Evaluating your chances can be a tough task. We all desperately want the chance to show what we can do. Along with giving it your best effort, you should also be honest with yourself. Listen to the top players, with respect, and use them as a guide for your progress. Give yourself a chance to succeed. But if after some time you feel that you will honestly not be a top player, relax! Have some fun. Make playing your creative outlet. After all, you can have a lot of fun playing even if you are not a superstar.

"Not everyone has the talent to be a superstar—or even a working professional drummer."



Personality is also a significant factor in a musician's success. Talented people who have difficulty working with others often don't do as well as they should. So less talented—but more cooperative—drummers sometimes get the jobs.

Then we have the age-old conflict of money versus music. Should you join a talented "originals" band and rehearse month after month for no money? Or should you join a Top-40 band and make good money, but enjoy the music less? One thought is that if you have little or no playing experience, you should join a Top-40 band. At least you will be playing, getting experience, performing in front of people, and being paid at the same time. You can always graduate to a more creative band once you have some experience.

The other approach is to play in a Top-40 band and rehearse with an "originals" band until something breaks. Many top studio players often work clubs for low money just for the chance to play, stay in shape, and have some fun.

Unrealistically high expectations can be another hindrance. When my son, who plays guitar, was a teenager, he told me that he intended to make one hit album, do one giant tour, and then retire and never have to work again. But he soon realized that life is not that easy. Now in his late 20s, he has recently started a small business. He still loves to play, but has decided that a life of touring isn't for him. He is happy, still loves music, and enjoys his new business. This was his way of working things out.

We are in a tough business, so be prepared. Learn all you can about music and drumming while you're young. Read some books on the "business" of music. Remember, work and preparation, plus opportunity, equal luck. Give it your best shot and see what happens.

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Ludwig's *Power Piccolo* is said to offer the high-end crack of traditional piccolo snares with the depth of standard-sized snares. The 6x13 *Power Piccolo* is made from six plies of maple, features Ludwig's Classic-style double tension lugs, and comes standard with a natural maple finish. **Ludwig Industries, P.O. Box 310, Elkhart,** IN **46515, (219) 522-1675.**

Evans EQ-3 Bass Drum System

Evans' new *EQ-3 Bass Drum System,* consisting of *EQ-3 Batter* and *Resonant* bass heads with an *EQ-Pad,* has been developed especially for situations that require internal bass drum miking. According to the company, the system optimizes the natural resonance of the bass drum head and shell while providing a mic' access port as well as a more "mainstream" acoustic bass drum sound and feel.

The *EQ-Pad* is an internal muffling device designed to incrementally reduce bass drum resonance. A bottom section is secured to the drumshell with *Velcro,* and a top section fits onto it and up against the bottom of the drumhead, acting as a hinged "gate." The pad can be moved along the *Velcro* strip for varying pressure and muffling against either head, and more than one pad can also be used at a time. The head/pad combination is sold in complete packages and in individual components. **Evans, PO. Box 58, Dodge City, KS 67801, tel: (316) 225-1308, fax: (316) 227-2314.**

Gon Bops Gongas

Gon Bops' *Gongas* feature *Rest Tone* collapsible resonators, which make these congas much smaller in size and lighter in weight than standard congas. Both quinto and conga with collapsible stands fit into one trap-style case provided by the company as an option. Gon Bops claims that no sound quality has been sacrificed with this new design.

Gongas are available only in pairs with the same head sizes as those in the regular Gon Bops line. Models in the *Deluxe 4125* series are available in natural mahogany, cherry red, walnut finish, or solid black, white, or red. Heads are made of American cowhide cured exclusively for Gon Bops. **Gon Bops, 2302 East 38th St., Los Angeles, CA 90058, tel: (213) 589-5211, fax: (213) 589-5268.**

ddrum Performer

Replacing the ddrum *KitSelector* is the *Performer,* a combination of programmable metronome and program switcher. The *Performer* has a built-in click, and drummers can either tap or write in the tempo and store the BPM value at 128 different locations. Values are retrievable with just the tap of a stick.

The *Performer* can also send a MIDI clock to control a sequencer. The makers say this makes it great for drummers who play along with sequencers. With a *Performer,* drummers are not forced to play a certain beat to a song every time, because a tempo of choice can be tapped in.

As a kit selector, the *Performer* is a useful accessory to the *ddrum 2.* Different setups and kits also can be chosen with the tap of a stick. The *Performer* features eight banks (each with eight kits) in which the user is able to program his or her own drumkit numbers and setups. **ddrum, P.O. Box 166,** 25 **Lindeman Dr., Trumbull, CT 06611, tel: (203) 374-0020, fax: (203) 371-6206.**

Deen Castronovo Video

DCI Music Video has announced the release of a new video with Deen Castronovo, *High Performance Drumming.* In this video, Deen plays many extended solos and demonstrates the techniques he uses to create them. Deen also covers topics like hand and foot techniques, grooving with a bass player, and developing solos. *High Performance Drumming* also contains a section on

developing grooves around various bass lines, featuring bassist Brad Russell. In addition, the video includes jams with recorded tracks and sequencers. **DCI Music Video, 541 Ave. of Americas, New York, NY 10011, (800) 628-1528, (212) 691-1884.**

DW 909 Cymbal Stacker

Drum Workshop's new *909 Cymbal Stacker* is an accessory for the *9700* cymbal stand/cymbal mounting system that allows drummers to mount multiple cymbals on a single cymbal stand or cymbal arm. The *909* features two toothless cymbal tilters with DW's cymbal space adjustment, which replaces the existing tilter section of DW's *9700* series cymbal stand or *912* boom arm. Because the *909* also has an additional angle adjustment and 6" rod for maximum convenience and flexibility in positioning the upper cymbal, one or more *909s* may be used together to create more personalized cymbal setups and effects. **DW, 2697 Lavery Ct., Unit 16, Newbury Park, CA 91320, (805) 499-6863.**

New From KAT

KAT has unveiled five new trigger pad kits. The *Pro Kit drumKAT* and the *Pro Kit KITI* consist of KAT's new 11" trigger pad, the *tomKAT*. The *tomKAT* has a multi-piezo configuration for superior response and an all-gum rubber playing surface for natural stick rebound. Other kits available are the *Club Date, Cluster Kit,* and *Studio Kit.* All kits can be controlled by either the *drumKAT* or *midiKITI* and an appropriate sound source.

Another innovation in the design of these new electronic kits is the *kicKAT* bass drum trigger pad. According to KAT, by utilizing new sensor technology, the *kicKAT* demonstrates a wide range of dynamic expression, while its steel construction assures strength and stability. It easily accommodates double pedals as well.

Also new are upgraded versions of KAT's *midiKITI* and *drumKAT.* Called *midiKITI PRO* and *drumKAT em* respectively, both include new, more powerful software, making both units twice as powerful as before. **KAT, Inc., 300 Burnett Road, Chicopee, MA 01020, tel: (413) 594-7466, fax: (413) 592-7987.**

Yamaha RY30 Rhythm Synth

According to Yamaha, the *RY30* programmable rhythm synthesizer allows real-time programming and editing functions previously found only on professional synthesizers like the Yamaha *SY77.*

The most obvious difference in the *RY30* is its programming wheel on the front panel. Used for five functions (four real-time and one recording), this wheel allows the *RY30* to change its sound and nuances in real-time, as an acoustic drummer would by continuously altering his or her playing style.

The wheel's four real-time functions are: Pitch Bend over a four-octave range, Filter (similar to *SY77* convolution filter), Envelope Generator assign, and Velocity. In the recording mode, the Time Shift function allows the timing of individual notes to be hurried or delayed. These parameters are all programmable for each voice individually, not just the whole set.

The *RY30's* newly developed pads are velocity-sensitive over the entire O - 127 MIDI range. In addition, all on-board preset voices and patterns are RAM-based. This allows the user to have the entire voice memory available for new and edited voices. If original voices are later desired, the data is backed up internally. There are 96 internal memories with an additional 36 card locations. **Yamaha Corporation of America, Dept. SGD, P.O. Box 6600, Buena Park, CA 90622, (714) 522-9011.**

New From Tough Traveler

Tough Traveler, manufacturer of *Drumslinger* percussion accessories, has announced two additions to their line of products.

Quick Stick is a simple but handy accessory bag for drummers who want to carry just one or two pairs of sticks for sitting in or for those times when a full stick bag isn't needed. This unobtrusive case can hang on drummers' hips while playing, or loops onto a stand.

The Drumslinger *Bass Drum Pack* features hide-away backpack shoulder straps. Once drums are set up, the *Bass Drum Pack* folds compactly away, taking up less than one third the space required for a hard or fiber case. The "headroom" storage pocket provides space for a spare head. And the bag's double-zippered side opening makes unloading a drum quick and easy. Constructed of durable, weather-proof DuPont *Cordura* nylon, the bag features T-27 EVA foam padding in the side walls to provide cushioned protection while maintaining flexibility for easy access. **Tough Traveler, 1012 State Street, Schenectady, New York 12307, tel: (518) 377-8526, fax: (518) 377-5434.**

MD Trivia Winners

The winner of MD's Trivia Contest in the November '90 issue is **Alex Pigeon,** of San Francisco, California. Alex's card was drawn from among those with the correct answer to the question: "What law-enforcing drummer has had a solo project under the pseudonym Klark Kent?" That drummer was ex-Police-man **Stewart Copeland.** Alex's correct answer earns him a set of Paiste *Sound Formula* cymbals valued at over $1,000.

December '90's Trivia Contest winner is **Larry Rice,** who knew that the *MD* cover artist featured in the documentary *Hail! Hail! Rock 'n' Roll* was **Steve Jordan.** Larry will receive one Jarrah and one Wandoo Block snare drum, courtesy of Brady Drums. Congratulations to both our winners!

IAJE Conference

The 18th annual conference of the International Association of Jazz Educators was held January 10 - 13 at the Sheraton Washington Hotel in Washington, D.C. More than 400 educators, students, and musicians from the U.S., Europe,and Japan met to share ideas, socialize, attend clinics and concerts, and celebrate the legacy of Duke Ellington. (Ellington was born in Washington, D.C. and spent the first third of his life in the city.)

Not everything that occurred at the conference had to do with Ellington, however. The IAJE sponsored clinics dealing with improvisation, jazz history, arranging, and vocal techniques, as well as encouraging jam sessions and interaction among the many musicians present.

Especially interesting to drummers attending the conference was a clinic called "Questions and Answers on Jazz Drumming with Joe Morello." In the standing-room-only crowd were both amateurs and old pros, including Morello's longtime friend and fellow drummer, Louie Bellson. Bellson had performed the previous night for conference attendees as a guest artist with the Bob Mintzer Big Band.

During the clinic Morello fielded questions from the audience, told a few jokes and drum stories, demonstrated some techniques, and ended by calling Bellson up to the front of the room for a drum duet. While Morello sat behind his Ludwig set and artfully worked out on the toms and bass drum, Bellson borrowed the snare and an adjacent table and demonstrated a few tricks of his own. The climax of the spur-of-the-moment jam session was a playful drum dialogue between these two masters.

The previous night another great jazz drummer, Max Roach, performed in the main ballroom with his latest band, the Double Quartet. With Roach acting as both the nucleus of the band and its main source of inspiration, the group's string and horn sections glided through a dazzling display of classically influenced jazz punctuated by Roach's precise cross-rhythms and powerful solos.

Other noted drummers performing at the conference or attending clinics included Marvin "Smitty" Smith (Mingus Dynasty), Ed Thigpen (Deborah Brown), Steve Smith (Steps Ahead), and Akira Tana (TanaReid).

For information on next year's conference, contact the IAJE at Box 724, Manhattan, Kansas 66502.

• Robert *Santelli*

Aquarian Forms Pro Drummers Club

In order to solve the problem of drummers not being able to find Aquarian products in their local shops, the company has created the Pro Drummers Club of America. Drummers can call to find a dealer near them, or they can order direct from the company. For more information and a free catalog, call (800) 473-0231, or write Aquarian Accessories at 1140 N. Tustin Ave., Anaheim, CA 92807.

In Memoriam

Drum educator and player **Tommy Cunliffe** recently passed away. Cunliffe was drummer and percussionist in many bands before forming his own big band and touring throughout Britain. Cunliffe also did TV work there, then moved to the United States, where he began a prosperous teaching career. Tommy also produced several top drummers in his time, including Carl Palmer. Several years ago he started a drum school in Florida and taught and lectured there during the winter months.

Billy Hyde's Drummers Playoff

Over 200 drummers recently competed in the Billy Hydes Amateur Drummers Playoff in Australia. Eight finalists met at Billy Hydes Drumcraft shop this past December 22, and were judged on style, creativity, groove, dynamics, and planning. Winner Chris Thompson walked away with a six-piece Remo *Mastertouch* kit, which had each of its drums signed by Remo clinician Virgil Donati. The sponsors say that the event will now be held annually and will extend to every Australian state. For more information, write to Billy Hydes Drumcraft at 104 Commonwealth Street, Surry Hills, NSW 2010, Australia, tel: (61-2) 211-1700, fax: (61-2) 555-1548.

Insight Seeking Manufacturer

Insight Percussion is looking for an established manufacturer to further development and production of their *Power Cradle Footboard.*

Favorable comments about the product have come from Paul Wertico of Pat Metheny's band, Chad Rager of Rager, Ron Riddle of Blue Oyster Cult, and Mark Craney. For more information, contact Insight Percussion at 1160 Burnham Dr., Columbus, OH 43228, (614) 878-7831.

Endorser News

New to PureCussion's endorser list are **Myron Grombacher, Nick Menza** of Megadeth, **Jamey Pacheco** of Babylon A.D., **Jay Schellen** of Hurricane, **David James Palmer** of Rod Stewart, **Ralph Molina** of Neil Young & Crazy Horse, and **Louie Perez** of Los Lobos.

Van Romaine of Steve Morse's band and **Chuck Burgi** (Brand X, Al DiMeola, Hall & Oates, Rainbow, Meatloaf) using Cappella drumsticks.

Will Calhoun using a custom-made Falicon Pyramid drum cage, seen at the recent Grammy awards show.

Billy Cobham has joined Mapex as an endorser and consultant. Other new Mapex endorsers include **Bob Nicol** (Red House), **Kenny** V (Saints & Sinners), **Michael Watkins** (Buddy Miles Express), **Portinho, Mitch McLee** (South Gang), and **Buddy Miles.**

Young drumming whizzes **Jacob Armen and Brooks Wackerman** have joined DW's artist endorser roster.

New Aquarian drumhead endorsers include **Jason Bonham, Rob Affuso, John Wackerman, Steve Ebe** (Human Radio), **Charlie Adams** (Yanni), **Vinny Damaio** (Jody Watley), **A.J. Pero, Brannen Temple** (Sheena Easton), **Pete Magadini, Anthony Johnson** (24-7 Spyz), and **Chris Parker.**

Legendary James Brown groovemeister Clyde Stubblefield using RimShot drumsticks.

New endorsers of Vater drumsticks include **Robert Rodriguez and Rafael Padilla** (Miami Sound Machine), **Pablo Batesta** (Jeffrey Osborne), **Rudy Richman** (London Quireboys), **Greg Morrow** (Amy Grant), **Dave DiCenso,** and **Robbie Ameen** (Ruben Blades).

Indy Quickies

The launch of **Burt Korall's** book *Drummin'Men* was recently celebrated at BMI's New York offices. Among the leading jazz drummers to join the celebration were Paul Motian, Chico Hamilton, Charlie Persip, Marvin "Smitty" Smith, and Connie Kay.

Historic drumshop **Drums Ltd,** of Chicago, Illinois, was recently acquired by Jack Cox and Terry Horler. Drums Ltd. president Bill Crowden established the business in 1963.

Drum Workshop has acquired Collarlock of Canada, and is now the exclusive manufacturer of Collarlock bar systems and components.

Premier Percussion USA has moved its offices and warehouse facilities to a new address: 1263 Glen Ave., Suite 250, Moorestown, New Jersey 08057. The new location will provide 60% more space than the company's previous facility.

Sabian has expanded its facilities in Meductic, New Brunswick by adding on 5,000 square feet of workspace. The space will be used primarily for distribution and specialty product manufacturing. This is the company's second major expansion in as many years.

Pro-Mark has purchased two state-of-the-art wood lathes for use in their Houston, Texas drumstick factory. Pro-Mark says that the new machines should help ease the order backlog that kept the factory open 20 hours a day, seven days a week for much of 1990.

Cappella has brought **Bob Erbe** on board as Educational Consultant.

Percussionist **James Petercsak** has recently been selected as a State University of New York Faculty Exchange Scholar.

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Electronic Drum Sale: Roland Pad 80, PM-16, PD-31, PD-11 & **all** Roland products on sale! Simmons, Pearl, Tama, & Sonor drumkits at Blowout deals!! Tama, Pearl, DW, & Yamaha hardware on sale. We have the largest stock of drum gear anywhere! BIZARRE GUITAR, 2677 Oddie Blvd, Reno, Nevada 89512. (702) 331-1001.

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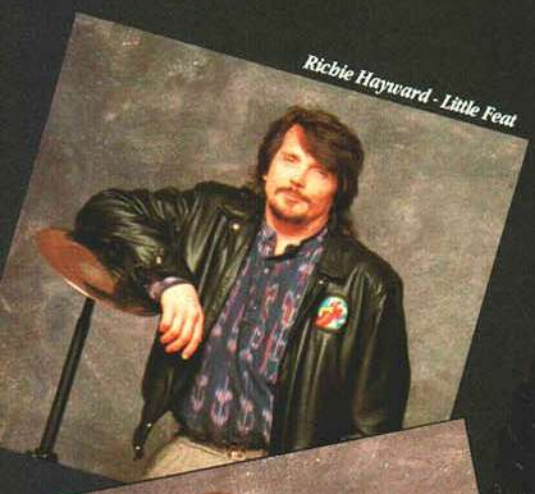
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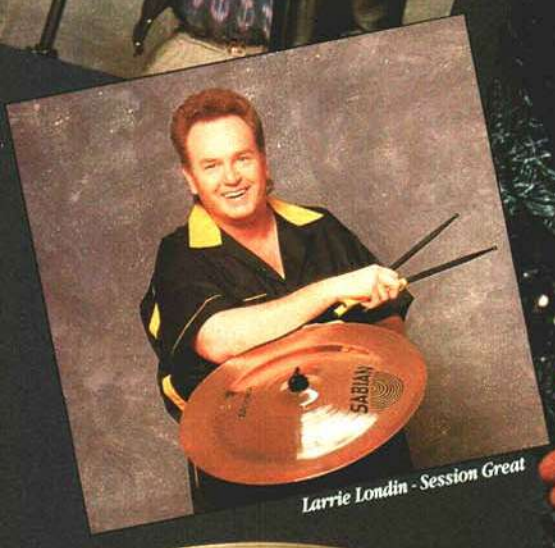

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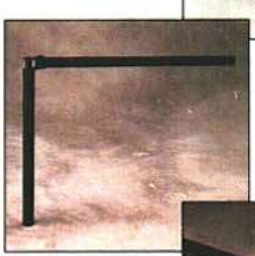

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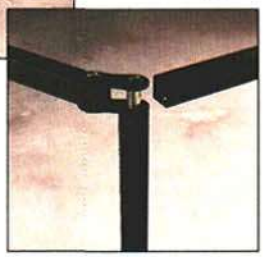

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